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WILD FLOWERS
— OR —
CALLIOPE

BY

ELMER E. DRESSER

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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

WILD FLOWERS

—FOR—

CALLIOPE,

—BY—

Elmer E. Dresser.

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PROEM.

Almighty Lord, the sinner's friend,
Consoler of the mourning mind,
Upholder of the fainting heart,
Love, Mercy, Justice, all combined,
I tune my heart to sing thy praise;
For Thou alone canst vivify,
With yearnings that can never die,
My earthward-tending lays.

The future would be dark indeed,
If Thou, my Light, didst not illume
Each single step which I must take
In this my journey to the tomb;
But, while one step, O God, is clear,
There is no reason for complaint—
And, with Thy presence, who can faint,
Ev'n though the road be drear?

To Thee I consecrate my life,
Make it, my God, a means of good,
Grant that my talents all may serve
Our noble christian brotherhood;
But be Thy will, O Father, done,
Help me to bow my stubborn will,
And trust not in my native skill,
But in Thee, Holy One.

THE HERO'S CHOICE.

Upon St. Lawrence, noble stream,
The stars, like watchfires, brightly shone:
Reflected in the waves, each beam
Was lovely as the gentle moan
Of zephyrs on a summer's eve:
The world did little light receive;
For, though the heavens were clear and bright,
The moon did not appear that night.

Floating swiftly down the river,
Like time's arrow, which doth shiver
The tender ties of human hearts,
Many a boat the water parts;
In the foremost of the fleet,
'Tween two soldiers, on a seat,
Is the hero of my story,
Wolfe, the spotless son of glory.

List! a voice dies on the water,
Naught it tells of strife and slaughter;
But, low and slow, yet full and free,
The lines of Gray's grand elegy
Come from the mouth of him,
Who, in the starlight dim,
Pursues along the playful wave,
"The path that leads unto the grave."

He looks upon his soldiers. None
Care for their lives, if victory 's won.
He speaks. Oh, list unto his voice!
The hero makes his solemn choice.
Pointing his finger toward the town,
Which Abraham's heights do overcrown,
He said: "The author of this I'd be
Rather, Quebec, than capture thee."

They land. They scramble up the banks.
They reach the top. They form their ranks.
The city slumbers. Naught they hear
But the sound of the sentinel's feet
Pacing his regular beat.
The land is silent far and near.
The eastern sky declares the dawn.
An hour is past. The night is gone.

The day advances. From the corn,
The savage devils, forest born,
Open remorseless fire. The line
Of English shows of fear no sign.
They wait—the French advance.
At forty paces is the targe.
They fire their musketry. They charge
With broadsword and with lance.

The French retire. "They fly, they fly."
Reaches the dying hero's ear.
"Who fly?" he asks. "The French," they cry.
"I die content:" Lo, death is near!
The field is wet with crimson gore.
Its fame will last forevermore,
United with the immortal name
Of Wolfe, the lord of martial fame.

History tells us with delight
The wondrous story of that night.
She loves to place the wreath of glory
Upon the hero of my story;
But the words the living hero said
Are the brightest wreath for the hero's head:
"The author of these lines I'd be,
Rather, Quebec, than capture thee."

A VISION.

The moon shone through the clouds that night,
And filled the land with mellow light,
Which awed the mind, but did not fright.
I watched the heavens, as, one by one,
Appeared each little twinkling sun,
While, like a sail,
Or snow-white vail,
The clouds athwart the heavens hung.
A dreamer such a scene would make
Of him who ne'er had fancy's tongue:
And he who had might freely slake
His thirst for the great, wild unknown;
For nature, then, was all alone.

By the fantastic influence
Of that weird scene, my ev'ry sense
Was captive led. The mystic land,
Where vision, with creative wand,
Is queen of all, floated around.
I saw strange sights but heard no sound.

I saw a lad, a thoughtful one,
Who loved above all else his books,
Who joined not in his playmates' fun,
But often sought wild forest nooks
And meditated there.

He saw a maiden pure as snow
Just fallen from the winter sky,
She seemed an angel free from woe,
To picture her I will not try;
For naught so sweetly fair
Has, since the world began,
E'er met the eye of man.

Need I tell you that a love,
Brighter than the stars above,
Filled his heart, and did inspire
Him with the poetic fire?
Hopefully he tuned his lyre,
And sang the praise of her who then,
Gave him a poetic ken.

They met by accident, 'twas said—
Alone, Joy filled his inmost heart;
And, when she spoke, he felt a thrill
Of pleasure, which his senses led
Astray. They had, at last, to part,
But the fond gladness lingered still.
No wonder Cupid's flower dart
Has been the theme of poesy;
Since it pierces to the heart,
And almost captivates the will,
Which otherwise is always free.
His fire of poesy blazed high,
Driving away the clouds that dimned his mental sky.

A change came o'er my dream. The boy
Heard that his darling, his heart's joy,
Was true—but to another! Then,
Although he hid it from all men,
His heart was broken, and his Muse,
So strong is th' influence of use,
Poured forth a song of woe. Ah! then,
You would have thought that ne'er again
His voice would sound; but men are men.

Awhile, for his amusement only,
He sang, when he was sad and lonely,
To drive the weariness away,
Which heavily upon him lay;
But, by degrees, he thought of fame,

And wished to win himself a name,
Which would survive the light of day;
And with pure thoughts of holiness,
He turned again unto the Muse
That, by her aid, he aye might bless
The world. With touching tenderness
He sang of nature's beauteous hues.
He also sang of her, sweet one,
And, when he sang, his song would run
Into a wild yet sweet refrain;
The millions heard and sought to gain
One look from him who in their hearts did reign.

Reddened the eastern sky. Each star
Began to shine more faintly. Far
And near, they twinkled out of sight;
But one of all the orbs of night
Remained. The vision's spell was broken.
That star still shone, the only token
That it had been. The night was done.
Soon Phœbus had his course begun.

A dream! you say, with sneering tone.
Some dreams will melt your hearts of stone.
They often send a brilliant light
Into life's dark and gloomy night;
And, for your spite,
You may atone
With many a tear and many a moan.

THE MURDER IN THE VALE.

I.

Sweet vale of Ellerslie, the pale moon shone
On thee that night, as if no dying moan,

No supplicating voice, in rev'rent prayer
Unto Jehovah, stirred the midnight air.
And yet, O God, there lies upon the floor,
Pierced by the tyrant's sword and bathed in gore,
The beauteous form of Wallace's young bride,
Of truth the flower, of womanhood the pride,
Faithful in death. Foul Heselrigge, thy blade
Hath wrought a deed which makes the laurels fade
On Edward's brow. O cold, inhuman wretch!
'Till end of time, that hellish deed will fetch
A flood of imprecations on thy name,
And make proud England's cheeks blood-red with shame.

II.

See Wallace, like his country's spirit, stand
Upon the craig, uplifted in his hand,
The tyrants sword, red with his Marion's blood.
(Halbert had brought it him through the dire flood
Which thunders o'er the fall of Corie Lynn,)
He sounds the Lanark pibroch; tells the sin,
Indelible, that stains the Southron's soul.
For answer, hear the awful slogan roll.
While women praise the dear, departed dead,
The men, by him demanding to be led,
Arm for the fight; then Wallace made a vow,
With eyes uplifted and uncovered brow:
"Ev'n from this hour, let Scotland's freedom date;
Or let a warrior's death-bed be my fate."

III.

God heard that vow. He was the patriot's might.
On that day dawned, for Scotland, freedom's light.
In witness: Lanark's tyrant falls; then, far
And near, upsprings the tide of highland war;
Dumbarton's rock is ta'en; the banks of Ayr
Have peace; and Cambus-Kenneth brings despair

To Edward, Stirling falls; from that proud hour,
In spite of treason, spite of Edward's power,
Albin is slave no longer. Wallace dies,
Ev'n as the Phœnix from its dust doth rise,
The Bruce appears, and, with avenging arm,
Renews the Slogan and the dire alarm.
The spirits of the chiefs again return;
And Bruce's right is crowned by Bannockburn.

IV.

Thus the foul murder in the beauteous vale,
Which caused the brow of Wallace ev'n to pale,
Unloosed the storm that drove the Southrons home.
No wonder! ev'n the arms of mighty Rome
Could not subdue the highlands, with the loss
Of legions. Where, O Wallace, was thy cross?
Thou lost thy Marion, and gain'dst renown.
Thou met'st thy death, the Bruce regained his crown.
Had she but lived, for her had been thy life,
Thou had'st forgotten Scotia for thy wife,
Thy life had happy been, thy death serene,
And Scotland ne'er her saviour would have seen.
To thee a kinder, nobler fate was given—
Love lost and freedom won on earth. and love regained in heaven.

A PÆAN.

I praise Thee, O Lord, for thy infinite mercy,
For thy love, which doth grasp the cold heart of the world,
Which showeth thy power omnipotent better

Than a universe into existence hurled.
Thou hast struck the spark of the native divine,
By a blow on the heart of the hardest of flints;
And a new gem of glory hereafter will shine,
In the crown that rests on thy brow benign,
With a luster of which present joy but hints;
And a ransomed soul through the age will sing
An anthem of praise to Redeemer and King.

AN AUTOGRAPH.

I dare not in this book of thine,
Speak of thy beauty most divine;
For even nature with the blues
Is fitter theme for Coeleb's muse:
But though I may not such things write,
I can but of thy goodness tell,
And of thy mind whose graces well
Would pay the poet to recite.
Indeed, in thee I see combined
Three graces rarely seen together,
Beauty, goodness, strength of mind,
Warranted to stand the weather.

THE STUDENT'S EVENING.

PRELUDE.

All day, the heavy, dismal rain,
With wind and cold, a woful train,
Had held the world in its embrace,

Until the eye could scarcely trace
The outlines of fair nature's face.
Night, with her sable cloak, came down
And covered all the little town.
Francis looked out upon the night,
Then turned him from the gloomy sight,
Which was with all drear darkness dight.
The lamp-light brightened up the room—
How strange that light can be near gloom!
The boy sat down, with lightsome heart,
Which naught but comfort can impart.
To learn his lesson he began,
With ease and quickness he did scan,
And then translate; how swiftly ran
The blood from out Adonis' thigh,
While Venus, much distressed, stood by,
And mourned her loss with awful cry!
He heard the creaking of the door,
And looked up from his classic lore.
Four schoolmates met his casual sight.
"Good evening, boys, you scared me quite.
How came you out on such a night?"
"Why, Frank," cried George, the smallest one,
"Of course we came to have some fun.
As to the night, the storm is done."
"Now, boys, let's have a jolly time,
And chase the hours away with rhyme,"
Said John, "and, Frank, you must begin,
To make your guests would be a sin."
"If you," said Frank, "will never tell
What happens here, 'twill all be well.
I'll read our class song." Quicker than
The wind, "Agreed," they cried, and he began.

FRANK'S CLASS SONG.

Classmates, pause before we part,

Backward look to-day,
With a sad yet joyous heart,
Our school life survey.

CHORUS:—Our student days have just begun,
Life shall cease e'er they be done.

Happy were the days we've passed,
School life's ever gay;
But, now, when we reach the last,
Sad must be our lay.

CHORUS.

As our triumph now we view,
Classmates, let us say:
"Thankful are our hearts to you
Who are here to day."

CHORUS.

Bright appears the future now,
Classmates, let us pray
That success may grace the vow
Our chorus makes to-day.

CHORUS.

INTERLUDE.

Applause around the circle ran.
Then John, the oldest one, began
A song of patriotic love,
Which raised them all the world above.

JOHN'S SONG—HARP OF COLUMBIA.

Harp of Columbia, waken!
Sound the proud notes of the free,
'Till all the earth be shaken
By thy grand melody.
Sons of Columbia, sing,
'Till the vault of heaven doth ring
With freedom's harmony.

Strike the sweet notes of the morning,
When Columbia's sons were brave,
When they gave fell tyranny warning,
They would win a land or a grave.
Sing of the heroes who fell,
Sing of that seven year hell,
Oh, sing the song of the brave!

Sing of that son of glory
Whom all the world doth love.
Tell us the heaven-lit story,
Bright as the stars above,
Of him who led the brave,
His fatherland to save
From all that tyrants love.

Harp of my country, waken!
Show me the fountain of bliss,
A drop from which will slakken
My thirst for power's kiss.
Sons of Columbia, quaff
The waters of liberty, laugh
At tyranny's dreams of bliss.

Sons of Columbia, waken
The fire of the free in your hearts.
A brand from each fire being taken,
Drive the darkness out of all parts
Of this land of liberty,
Where reposes the dust of the free.
Oh, waken slothful hearts!

Ye slavish souls, awaken!
Do not clog the wheels of time,
The resolution's taken,
Our duty is sublime,
Dishonor put away,

Corruption we will slay,
And follow, Harp, thy rhyme.

INTERLUDE.

Applauding words went round the crowd,
Three hearty cheers were shouted loud,
All said that John would make the best
Of poets, e'er he sank to rest;
But John remarked, he wished that they
Would list to Henry's playful lay.
Henry, thereat, commenced to sing
A sweet, delicious little thing.

HENRY'S SONG—THE LOVER'S PLEA.

O lady, list unto my tale,
Though it be full of care and woe;
For joy throughout it doth prevail,
Because, dear one, I love thee so.

My darling, when I saw thee first,
I thought an angel passed me by,
The clouds of gloom assunder burst,
And sunshine brightened all the sky.

My cares were all forgotten, then,
My heart was fired with untold joy;
For when love deigns to smile on men,
The pains of life do not annoy.

And I, my darling, since that day,
Have kept thee throned within my heart,
Oh, dearest, do not say me nay!
Oh, say one word before we part!

Sweet one, thine eye doth tell the tale,
Far sweeter than thy lips to me.
In payment, love, I will not fail,
I'll give my living love to thee.

INTERLUDE.

"That's just like Henry," cried they all.
"His creed," said Frank, "would frighten Paul:"

Where'er the sun shines on the earth,
Where'er God's blessings fall,
In scenes of woe, or scenes of mirth,
Love reigneth, queen of all."

A merry laugh at this arose,
And soon as it came to its close,
George, who was wont big words to use,
Addressed himself unto the Muse.

GEORGE'S ADDRESS TO THE MUSE.

O sacred Muse of poesy, inspire
Me with the harmony of thy sweet lyre,
That, 'mong the many who surround thy throne,
Who do thy pleasure, and thy scepter own,
I' filled with love and admiration strong,
May give due praises to the sons of song,
And, thus, to thee, who bearest bards along.
No age so distant but it shows some name,
Worthy of honor and a poet's fame.
Greece hears, amid her islands hoar,
A mighty harmony, which, like the roar
Of waters lashed to fury by the storm,
When clouds and darkness do the sky deform,
Gives pleasure of a grand and lofty kind.
It cometh from a poet poor and blind!
Judea's pleasant vales and mountains ring
With the grand anthems of her Shepherd King.
Rome, on her seven hills, is bright as day,
Her sun is poesy, each bard a ray.
Night settles on the earth; but, at the dawn,
Ere the dark shades of ignorance are gone,
We hear the minstrel sing of deadly frays,

Or lovers lull to sleep with gentle lays,
Once more, the sun of poesy appears,
Dispelling ignorance and calming fears.
As he approaches the meridian,
The light of poesy would dazzle man;
But that, O Muse, thy mellowed light is given,
To make it mild, and add the charms of heaven.
Thus, like a forest giant thunder-riven,
Well known from Nevis to the shore of Devon,
Our Epic King gives forth such brilliant light,
As would make noon-day of the darkest night;
But other bards, O Muse, with lesser ray,
Unite their light with his to make the day.
As I, O Muse, in this bright light do stand,
And view the wondrous structures of thy hand—
Which is the hand of the Creator's self,
Oh, help me to admire, seeking no pelf!
And well I may admire the cause of mirth,
Sublimity and beauty on our earth.
Oh, let all bards unite to give due praises birth!

INTERLUDE.

Said John: "Dear George, I like your verse,
Your vivid scenes, expressions terse,
Do rival him, the Grecian pride,
And all who since have with him vied."
Said Frank: "I, too, do like your song,
It bears such noble thoughts along."
But Henry said: "I like it not.
It tries to hit too big a spot.
No matter whom the lines may please,
They sound to me like Johnsonese.
Come Jesse, 'tis your turn to try
To picture truth for reason's eye,
Or stir the soul with motives high."
Then Jesse sang a pensive strain.
Oh, may it wake in us a glad refrain!

JESSE'S SONG—COME, CELESTIAL MUSE.

Come, celestial Muse, and sing
Of her who wakes the minstrel's lay.
Make, oh, make the heavens ring
With notes like her, sweet, wild and gay.

Sing, O Muse, with measures light,
Of her blue eyes bright and sweet.
Wake the echoes of the night
With the voice I joy to greet.

Give thy melody the grace
Of the music of the spheres,
Till, in vision, her sweet face
From the gloomy shades appears.

Then leave me in the silent trance,
Which falls on men, when thinking most,
When our thoughts, in mazy dance,
Rush by, a grand and mighty host.

From out that silent revery,
Will spring a holy stream of song;
And listeners, who'er they be,
Will, by its force, be borne along.

Then sing a song of her I love,
And sing, O Muse, with accents sweet;
Yes, sing of her, the lovely dove,
And lay thy offering at her feet.

CONCLUSION.

"I like thy heavenly lays," cried Frank,
"And thee with Burns and Moore, I rank."
Said George:—"The great applause he gains
Shows love of feeling more than pains."

Said Henry:—"My applause is given
To thee; and may their throats be riven,
Who give not thee their humble praise:
For, surely, thou sing'st beauteous lays."
"No more, no more," then Jesse cried,
"Lay these fond compliments aside.
Night with her thousand orbs of light
Is far advanced, so, friends, good night."
Good nights were interchanged by all,
His friends passed out into the hall,
Then Frank unto the window went,
And watched the stars, which brightly lent
Wild beauty to the dreamy night.
After some time in silence spent,
In words he gave his feelings vent:—
"Ye stars that now illume the earth,
To reverence have ye given birth,
So that men give your name to worth.
Shine on, ye stars, forever shine,
Oh, may your purity be mine!
Now, as the hour for sleep is nigh,
Ye orbs, I bid you all good bye."

THE MANIAC'S RAVINGS.

Oh, that my voice had a Byronic gloom,
Dark as the tomb!
Oh, could I laugh
At virtue's cenotaph,
The foul corrupted body, which the doom
Of physical hell, doth quaff,
With maniac madness, I would terrify
Th' inhuman hearts of stone,

Which, like the Pharisee, would cry,
I am above such filth as thou, let me alone.
And may God in his justice grant
That—I forgot, with the indignant pant
Of too long smothered passion—that but one
Can justly mete out vengeance and damnation,
As well as give the priceless, free salvation.

Can men doubt hell?
Devils believe and tremble.
The damned, at least, do not dissemble;
For, as the blind old bard makes truth, the hell-doomed tell,
"Which way I turn is hell, myself am hell."
Oh, if the blatant, foul-mouthed, shameless infidel
Had but the soul to feel what I have felt,
The serpent-like, cold sneer would melt
In tears of terror, viewing nature's angry God!

And is it I?
This frenzied, maniac form, which is the jest
Of thoughtless, unkempt youths and baser men,
Who, as they would to Barnum's, come to see my den
To make an hour pass pleasantly?
Or is't some demon from the pit in this soiled covering dress'd?
O fool, Gehenna is a type most mild
Of what the guilty soul must feel,
Who has the Christ denied, himself defiled,
And, through the nasty slums of hell-born vices, reeled.

But, even to my clouded mind,
Some milder seasons come,
When, through the mists I think I hear of angel tones the hum:

And faintly in my bosom wakes
The thought that I'm designed
To prove the justice of the Lord,
As manifested in his word,
To show the vipers of the human race
A glimpse of what, to their disgrace,
They fain would falsify,
And, in my dark estate, which I admit is just,
Though on a level with the loathsome worms of dust,
That, if too weak to try
To strive, the Lord will hear my cry,
And cleanse my lep'rous soul in Jesus' blood,
Who, from the cross, for sinners poured the healing flood

GOD, MY JUDGE.

The monarch of the forest, king of beasts,
In the white heat of anger, lashed his sides,
For days and nights, with roar that startled space.
Not one alone, but many in the cave,
Nature intended for a fairy grot;
But, which, by man into a dungeon made,
Served as arena for the starving whelps,
Fighting, thereby, to deaden famine's ache.
But, silence and the shades of twilight fell
Together, and the whilom raving brutes
Calmly lay down, as if they had been fed
By hands unseen, and it was so, for He
Who showered his manna in the days of old,
Upon his people, sent his angel here
To save his prophet from the heathen's hate.
With quiet peace, Daniel sat in the midst,

Contentment resting on his placid brow.
The joy, which comes from doing right, shone out
From 'neath the eye-brows, which, in bold relief,
Displayed the marble temple of his mind,
A mind which proved the truthfulness of him,
The proto-legislator of the race,
Who said: "He breathed into his nostrils breath
Of life, and man became a living soul."
Yea, God-like in repose, the prophet sat,
Reviewing in his thoughts the wonderful
And patient guidance, which the Lord of Hosts
Bestowed upon his people and on him;
Unworthy of such condescending love:
And, as he pondered the ingratitude,
Black as the gloom of the pre-lucent night,
Which shrouded chaos, ere the word divine
Transformed to cosmos all the gaseous void,
His bosom heaved and from his lips the sigh
Of pent-up feeling, like an autumn wind,
Mournfully floated through the cave confined.
Then, with his face turned toward Jerusalem,
Upon his knees, his hands upraised to Heaven,
Unmindful of the lion's burning breath,
Which, with its loathsome vapors fanned his cheek,
In earnest supplication, long he prayed:
"Omniscient Father of all things that live,
Thy loving kindness to me in the past,
Thy just, yet merciful, sweet punishment,
The promised restoration to the land
Of my forefathers, and the greater boon,
In which all nations of the earth are blessed,
Th' Annointed King of David's royal line,
All these and this my present state combine
To bow my thankful soul before thy power,
Ev'n as Thou didst deliver him, who cleansed
Thy house, polluted by Ahaz, the vile
Corrupter of fair Judah's sunny hills

And groves, who made his son pass through the fire,
The most abom'nable of heathen rites,
Which makes its site, the son of Hinnom's vale,
Gehenna, signify home of the damned;
So, Thou hast me delivered from the jaws
Of these huge lions, which lie round about,
Ev'n as the fathers of mine enemies,
Along the conduit of the upper pool,
Lay smitten by thy holy angel's hand,
A hundred, fourscore and five thousand men.
My soul panteth for Thee, O Lord of Hosts,
And for thy holy hill and sacred courts;
My heart, my flesh, seeketh the living God.
These lords of Babylon, whose rage is vain,
Give homage to the lamp which thou hast set
In heaven, to give thy earth-born creatures light,
Bowing before it as unto a God.
Their priests, for aye, feed the symbolic fire
To worship when Thou veil'st th' original.
But Judah, when to Zion she returns,
O God of Abraham, keep her from the slime
Of heathen rituals and man-made Gods.
The sin, for which she now is held in thrall
By this unrighteous nation, ban for aye
From Israel, thy chosen people, Lord.
Already I have seen one dynasty
Of tyrants, end amid the mingled flow
Of wine and blood, and I behold far off
A similar doom for Persia, drunk with fame.
The factions, satraps and the wide domain,
Unwieldy in its massiveness, proclaim
Its downfall, with an omen full as sure,
As were the palid brow and smiting knees,
The signs of fear, when impious Belshazzar
Saw, 'midst the feast, the finger of a man,
Writing upon the plaster of the wall

Of the king's hall, 'cross from the candlestick,
Words which no one but me, inspired by Thee,
Interpret could. Whatever happens, Lord,
Creator of land, sea and firmament,
Protect thy Zion and keep pure the hearts
Of all thy chosen people, Israel."
Thus, in communion pleasant with his God,
Unharmed, Daniel remained until the dawn
Mingled its rosy colors with the blue
Along the eastern sky, and it was day.

Meanwhile, in the abode of royalty,
Stung by the outcome of his guilty pride,
Darius, fasting, passed the night in woe.
His grief had banned music, offspring of heaven,
Sweet effervescence of the gladdest thought;
And sleep, pale shadow's twin, refused to cast
Her peaceful mantle o'er his troubled mind.
So, in the impotence of dire despair,
He eased his mind by giving sorrow voice:
"Curse on my towering pride, which swells itself
To fill position, which I had not gained,
If my ability had been the scale.
Base, selfish self, to ape the king of kings,
Nay, even seek to rival th' august Sun;
Because the one, who bears the fire-orb's name,
And has the power, of which I have the title,
Has honored me, his uncle, with this throne,
Which his own valor and the gods obtained.
Had he not led the gathered hosts to war,
Two thousand chariots armed with murderous scythes,
Horsemen and foot who shook the fertile earth,
When, pouring from the gates, the march began,
To end far west upon the sounding shore,
This impious law which cannot be annulled,
Had not received the royal signature.

Oh, woe is me! my ablest counselor,
The main prop of my throne, Cyrus being gone,
Asunder torn, is greedily devoured;
For it is not one moment to be thought
That he can hold at bay the ravened brutes;
Still, many wondrous tales are told of him,
And, sooth, he's of a most peculiar race.
They say that he foretold Belshazzer's doom,
Before th' assembled nobles at the feast;
While, wading through the fastly low'ring stream,
Ev'n then, our soldiers passed inside the walls;
And, stranger still, himself I heard declare,
That, full two hundred times, the sacred Sun
Has neared the northern limit of the sky
And then crept back, since lived a mighty man,
Skilled in all knowledge, who oft converse held
With the immortal God, the living God,
As he doth call him. Now, this man, he says,
Foretold the capture of fair Babylon,
Not in such words as may mislead the mind,
As did the oracle at Delphos given
To him who led th' allies to direful war,
And reigned at Sardis, richest of all men;
But with minute details, ev'n to the name
Of my most glorious kinsman—oh, that he
Were here; for he's the only traveler,
Who could prescribe for my afflicted mind!
Child of my heart, too generous for the world,
Heir of this throne, which thou hast given to me
By aid of thy right arm and matchless skill,
Thank heaven that thou wert trained at Persia's court,
And hadst a father able to instruct
Thee how to wield thy crown as well as sword:
For, hadst thou seen thy father mad with crime,
Each time the chieftains met around his board,
Or hadst thou seen him gorgeously arrayed,

From morn till night to awe the cringeing crowd;
Thou wouldst have imbibed the poison, pride,
The blessings of both friends and foes would not
Have followed thee throughout thy stormy life,
And now, thou mightst be mourning the sad death
Of thy best subject, and have conscience say,
Hissing the words of torment in thine ear,
Thy foolish pride has murdered a true friend."
Thus he lamented, while the minutes dragged,
Each of their sixty wings broke by desire,
In her rude haste to push them faster on:
But when the first ray of the rising sun
Shone faintly in upon the castle's gloom,
With utmost speed, he hastened to the cave.

"O Daniel, servant of the living God,
Is thy God, whom thou servest all the time,
Able to save thee from the lion's jaws?"
Doubt trembling on his tongue, the monarch cried.
Calmly, though almost deadened by the wall
Of solid rock, sealed by the king and chiefs,
Daniel made answer, pleading innocence,
And the protection of the living God,
Respectfully, but not in abject terms.
So, at the joyful king's command, unharmed,
Daniel was lifted from the loathsome den;
And they, whose envy caused the base decree,
Met retributive justice, for the fierce
Lions devoured them and their wives and babes;
And the decree went forth through every land,
That all should bow before the living God,
Who had judged Daniel free from any wrong,
By keeping him all that long night from harm.

A CHRISTMAS CAROL.

Sweet, amaranthine loveliness
Doth in the lowly manger lie;
And, on the cross, mankind to bless,
He hangs in awful agony;
But, from the power of the grave,
The cross of Christ alone can save.

The proto-martyr meets his fate,
His eyes beholding heavenly scenes,
He bears the flood of fiendish hate;
Because, upon the cross he leans.
Yea, when in passion men do rave,
The cross of Christ alone can save.

In our own lives, when perils rise,
And fear would master all our mind,
We see the blood-cross in the skies,
And leave both fear and death behind.
From dangers which appear so grave,
The cross of Christ alone can save.

If I should cross the stormy sea,
Or face the terrors of the sword,
The thought of Christ would bring to me
Peace, ev'n amid the fighting horde.
From danger, death, hell and the grave,
The cross of Christ alone can save.

CHRISTMAS VOWS.

'Tis Christmas eve: soft eyes are beaming
With tenderness on me;

A fairer face, ev'n in my dreaming,
I ne'er—nor e'er will see.

"Soft eyes are beaming, ay, and glowing
With glances of caress,
The dark hair, and the pure face showing
Ambrosial loveliness.

"Sweet lady, in their depths of beauty
Can there be love for me?
Or must I, from a sense of duty,
Still leave thy young heart free?

"For thy fond tenderness, I love thee.
What more can beauty ask?
To find a fair, that ranks above thee,
Would be a toilsome task.

"Oh, grant the pleasure thou canst give me!
Oh, say that sweet, sweet word!"
"I love thee, darling." "Oh, believe me!
I'm happy as a bird."

And thus, of their fond love, the current
Began th' eternal flow
From the banks of earth to the shore beyond
The stars' celestial flow.

THE DEATH OF THE OLD YEAR.

I.

One by one, the stars appear
In the broad expanse of blue;
And the shades of night draw near,

Hiding all the world from view.
In the west a strip of yellow
Tells the sun has sunk to rest,
And the twilight, weird and mellow,
Waves upon night's phantom crest.
Clouds, that, like a lady's veil,
Beauties hide from mortal sight,
Fleecy with the starlight pale,
Give wild splendor to the night;
But the clouds are disappearing,
Showing forth each tiny sun,
While, on earth, the night is rearing
High the trophies he has won.
Let us, ere we farther go,
Read the lesson of the hour;
For, to learn what God doth show,
Is our noblest earthly power.
As we, when the night grows black,
Look unto the stars above;
So, when troubles haunt our track,
Let us always look at love.

II.

Darkness, deep and dismal, covers
All the land from east to west.
Many a ghostly shadow hovers
O'er the world's unbroken rest.
'Tis earth's robe of mourning deep
For the dying of the year,
Which, while the land is wrapped in sleep,
Feels his end is drawing near.
Brightly shines Orion there,
Following his dogs along,
While the Pleiades so fair
Flee before the hunter strong.
Mars, in the south, with blood-red light,
Faces Polaris, noble star,

Which is the monarch of the night.
Though other orbs shine brighter far,
They are the escort, bright and rare,
Who bring with them the new-born year
Into the regions of the air,
As the old year's death draws near.

III.

Can it be that this is death?
Is the year about to die?
Gentle, as a sleeper's breath,
Are the winds, as they pass by.
Nature seems as happy now
As the bride before the altar;
Scenes of beauty, sweet, I trow,
Passing by me do not falter.
All is happy, blithe, and free,
Save the darkness, which doth hold,
Woodland wild and peaceful lea,
Mountain stern and grassy wold.
Surely, worn out is the year,
Or he would not die to-night,
When the world is free from fear,
And nature is with beauty dight.

IV.

Ere thou diest, aged year,
Tell me all that thou hast seen,
In the winter, cold and drear,
In the spring time, bright and green,
Did I hear the murmuring of the breeze,
As it passed my window by?
Or did a sprite from 'neath the trees
To my question give reply?
I thought I heard a sweet, sad song,
And these were the words that were said:
"The tale I tell will not be long;

For, soon, I shall be with the dead.
I have seen the drunkard lie asleep,
In clothes, that were soiled and torn,
I have seen a mother o'er him weep,
With a face that was troubled and worn,
In short, I have seen all crimes that are
In this wicked world of ours;
But, above them all, like a shooting star,
Ascend love's holy flowers."
Silent again was all around,
Unseen was ghost or fay;
But, in my memory, every sound
Will remain till my dying day.

V.

Brighter shine the silver stars
In the giant arch of heaven,
Where the brightness nothing mars,
Where celestial light is given,
Blacker is the darkness here,
Than it was an hour ago:
Let us shed a parting tear,
Ere the old year be laid low.
Many are the joys he gave,
Not unmixed with grief 'tis true.
As he sinks into his grave,
Let his mourners not be few.
Age has worn his vigor out,
No disease devours his life,
He is warm, his mind is stout,
Peace has not giv'n place to strife.

VI.

Will the new year equal be
To the one that's passing now?
Fulfilled will he ever see,
Each solemn oath and vow?

Will he bring us joy or care?
Give us sickness or good health?
Will he bring us weather fair?
Will he show the way to wealth?
Will love her holy light transmit,
To guide us on our way?
Will peace upon her right hand sit,
And hold her gentle sway?
Lo! the year is failing fast,
Can it be that he still lives?
Surely long he cannot last,
Unless new life to him God gives.
Slowly pass the moments by,
Death will be here ere the dawn.
Hark! On the winds a gentle sigh,
Another, ha! the year is gone.

THE ERL-KING.

Through the boughs the wind sighed,
And the owlets cried,
As a knight did ride
Through the forest wild.
Upon his breast,
Was a child at rest,
Who sweetly smiled.

The night was black,
Scarce seen was the track
Before him or back,
As he galloped along;
But his heart was light,
And he startled the night,
With a merry song.

As his voice died away,
The very last ray
Of light followed the day,
    Leaving darkness behind.
The spur drank blood,
Back flew the mud,
    Strange fears filled his mind.

"O father, dost see?
Behind that oak tree,
Oh, what can it be?"
    Thus spoke the boy.
"'Tis naught but the shade,
Which the oak tree made,
    My frightened toy."

Swift was the speed
Of his foaming steed.
Dire was the need,
    Groans rent his breast,
Although his heart's joy,
The darling boy,
    Now seemed to rest.

"O father, that thing
Is the horrid Erl-king.
He commences to sing.
    Oh, list to his song!"
"It is naught, my dear child,
But the storm wind wild.
    We'll be home before long."

On, on the horse sped,
The boy rested his head
On his father and said:—
    "Oh, list to his song,
He sings: 'Come with me,

I will care for thee,
Sweet child, come along.

'Oh, come away!
It will soon be day,
I am no fay,
Dear boy, come with me.
I will give thee wealth,
I will give thee health,
And a prince thou shalt be.'

O naughty thing,
To papa I'll cling;
And, although you are king,
You can't take me away."
"Be still my child,
Thou art growing wild.
It will soon be day."

"O father, I fear
The Erl-king is near,
Oh, dost thou hear
His awful song:—
'Thou must go with me,
I came for thee,
Do not keep me long.'

"O father, do see,
The Erl-king in glee
Stands smiling at me.
He looks like an oak.
His legs are a wonder,
They seem split asunder
By the light'ning's fierce stroke.

"His ghastly head
Is an acorn, red
With the blood of the dead.

His eyes are like fire.
His giant form,
Like clouds in a storm,
Rises higher and higher.

"He has grasped my arm,
Father, break his charm,
Ere'he do me harm,
Press me close to thy breast.
Oh, I feel his cold breath!
Oh, can it be death?"
Then the child seemed to rest.

A light gleamed ahead,
As onward they sped;
But all joy had fled
From the father's heart.
On, on, he did dash,
Like the lightning's flash,
Till the trees did part.

Like the wind, he rode
Across fields newly mowed,
Till he reached his abode
On the top of the hill.
When he reached the door,
His child was no more.
The knight mourns for him still.

THERE IS NO DEATH.

There is no death. The universe is life,
From each small atom to its glorious Head.
When mortals leave this realm of pain and strife,

'Tis but a change of home ; yet it is said
That henceforth they are numbered with the dead.
Sometimes, we say our dearest friends depart
To better lands ; but still our minds are fed
On grief so bitter, that the tears will start,
And those sweet words, so grand, mean nothing to the heart.

The mother watches over her dead child,
With broken heart and feelings full of pain,
And, in her boundless grief, is madly wild
To think her child must in the grave remain.
She doth not think her loss her darling's gain,
She lets her grief cry havoc to her wit,
The balm to heal her wound she doth disdain,
And, in a painful stupor, long doth sit,
Forgetting that, for her sweet child, Heaven is more fit.

The husband, gazing on the pale, white face
Of her who was his life, his complement,
But, now, doth show of death's cold hand the trace,
With stifled groans doth give his feelings vent,
Thus showing, that his inmost heart is rent,
That he has lost his dearest, only love,
That he bewails what he cannot prevent,
While he should be as gentle as a dove,
And wait, till angels bear him to the home above.

The flowers are withered by the autumn frost,
They sink from sight, and, as we say, they die ;
Yet not an atom of those flowers is lost.
So, too, when we upon our death-beds lie,
We do not perish, no, we do not die ;
But, as those jewels, which we call the dew,
Do disappear and mount into the sky,

So we but seek a land beyond the blue.
We may not realize this, but we know 'tis true.

SONNETS.

I.

SLEEP.

O sleep, when thou art not, what oft thou art,
The pastime of the sluggard, thou art sweet
To all mankind, the rest for them most meet.
In huts as well as palaces, thy part
Is most divine. Thou givest a fresh start
Unto the life-blood, which ev'n to the feet,
Dashes along each broad, arterial street,
Then sluggishly creeps back into the heart,
The engine of the system. Thou dost give
To beauty charms, without thy aid unknown.
To strength, thou givs't new vigor and new tone,
To all, new life. So long as men shall live,
Both young and old, to thee shall offerings bring,
And, in thy praise, each bard will ever sing.

II.

There is a secret longing in my heart,
Which God alone can soothe, yet does not heal,
A longing which my soul must ever feel;
But still to human being ne'er impart.
It is the dammed up current, which did start
In the first flush of hope, when love did seal
My very life in either woe or weal.
It is the woe that 'cross the mind doth dart
By contact with the cold and cruel world,
Without a human breast, on which to lean

And pour into the sympathizing ear
One's daily troubles, till is seen unfurled
Love's glorious banner, while, with 'vengeful spleen,
Hell-born despair doth fly and peace appear.

III.

O Lord, my God, have mercy and forgive,
If pardon can be granted to the one,
Who vilely sins against thy holy Son,
And is the chief of those who sensual live.
My soul, O Father, try in thy great sieve
Of wondrous love, and, when the work is done,
Oh, sanctify me, till my race be run!
I ask not, with high-sounding substantive
And six, that I may grand and useful be,
But, in a simple phrase and humble tone,
The boon that Thou canst give, and Thou alone,
Salvation, now, and in eternity.
Lord, I believe Thee, and thy promise given,
That men, by faith, may enter into Heaven.

IV.

MISSPENT TALENT.

Oh, how much God-given talent is misspent!
It makes one pray, with agonizing soul,
That He, who doth the elements control,
Will send his Spirit forth, and thus prevent
The waste of power, which many souls has sent
To Hell, and still is sending to that goal.
Oh, let the torrent of thy truth still roll,
With renewed power, and make a mighty rent
In the dire dam, which holds the active good
In man pent up, that, with tremendous flow,
It flood the world with every noble form
Of true beneficence and brotherhood

In Christ the Lord! So every man will know
That God on earth directs both peace and storm.

V.

THE CHARMS OF PURITY.

As wise Ulysses, on the wave-bound isle,
By fair Calypso's charms divine encased,
Still thought of his Penelope so chaste,
Who mourned her loss at Ithaca, meanwhile;
So I, caught by Minerva's surest wile,
With cares each other following in haste,
So that, of sweet repose I cannot taste,
Think oft of thee, my darling, free from guile,
As was the primal mother when she dwelt
In the elysian fields of Paradise,
And plucked ambrosial blossoms near her bower,
And joyously the heavenly breezes felt.
Like her, sweet one, thou art too pure and nice
To liken to aught other than a flower.

ZACH. CHANDLER.

A nation mourns for thee, brave heart,
Who rose above thy low estate,
And placed thy name among the great,
Those who have nobly done their part.

Thou tastest now eternity,
Beyond the realm of mortal ken,
And longing fills the souls of men,
Great statesman, is it well with thee?

As to thy fame, there is no doubt;
The brethren in thy righteous cause,
Supporters of the country's laws,
For aye, will drive oblivion out.

Thy life of honesty and worth
And labors for thy native land
A lasting monument command,
The blessings of a grateful earth.

TO ———.

KALAMAZOO, Sept. 24, 1881.

My darling love, as Horace did of old
His fancies to a friend indite;
So, trusting in thy trust, I now make bold,
For thee, my burning thoughts to write.
Thou wilt not scorn to read thy poet's verse,
Though it be worse,
Than what thy loving heart would fondly hope;
But thou wilt give thy sympathy full scope,
Knowing—the heart hath deeper deeps
Than verbal plummet e'er can sound;
When the dull line so slowly creeps,
Th' ecstatic soul may spurn the ground.

It boots not asking what my theme,
When every heart, congealed by grief,
Sighs to th' Almighty for a beam
Of heaven-descending solace and relief.

My mind turns back to that sweet Lord's day morn,
When from the little town the news was borne
Through the chill valley, pregnant with the thought

Of the dark river which we all must cross,
The baleful rumor of a nation's loss.
Oh, what a change one thrilling moment wrought!
Each heart was sad, and all the eye could see
Seemed darkened by the drapery of despair;
And the red sun from mid-heaven seemed to glare,
Of human woe, in hateful mockery.

Then, like a balm, unto each troubled soul,
The message came of hope. Beyond control,
The bosom heaved with gratitude sincere,
And every hour of suffering made more dear
The nation's chosen.
To the reprobate,
The deep damnation of a people's hate
Will cling. Along with Arnold, Booth and Burr,
Above Jeff. Davis, Guiteau's name shall be,
Not in oblivion's spacious sepulchre,
But in the lowest hell of infamy.

"Vengeance is mine, I will repay," the Lord
Hath said. Let us, then, trust his holy word,
Give up the wretch to Justice infinite,
And humbly view the victim in the light
Of mercy, beaming from the Lamb of God.

A nobler path in life was never trod
Than his, for whom we mourn. Trite adjectives
Give place to the sublime words of the dead,
Which are a crown of glory for his head,—
"God reigns, the government still lives."

This utterance, like a benediction, fell
Upon the people, when our Lincoln lay,
Oozing his dearly valued life away;
And for us to apply them now were well,

When he who gave them birth, hath reached the
home
Of purity, with ransomed feet to roam
Forevermore the fields of paradise.

Of simulation, this is no device;
For Jesus on the mountain did proclaim,
"Blessed the pure in heart, they shall see God."
Yes, while we bow beneath Heaven's chastening
rod,
Let us, too, say, "God reigns," and in the same
Breath, as a sequence, that the nation lives.
And let us emulate
The good example which our late chief gives,
Living for Christ, who died outside the gate
That we might live, and, in the name of Him,
Leading our fellow mortals from the dim
Errors, that gender in the demons' brains,
By sight of bliss most sweet, which can but
come
Into a noble, philanthropic home,
Where Christ is Lord, and chaste love ever reigns.

VOX DOLORIS.

Well may the English land
Mourn for the fall'n whose names henceforth shall
stand
Among her mighty dead, whose lives live on
In the live thoughts of men, from whom they're
gone.

Carlyle, it glads my heart to think of thee,
Thou Titan, battling with the hosts of sham,

Hypocrisy, and cant, which deeply damn
The world, by breeding infidelity;
And if, in the great conflict of thy age,
Thy course was oft in error, if thy rage
At hollow pretense led, at times, to sneers
Against the living faith of former years,
We can forgive these stumbles of the man.
In spite of imperfections, in the van
Of those who fought for truth wert thou, great soul;
And mighty are thy thunders as they roll
From thine Olympian height into the ranks
Of flabby unreality. All thanks
To the brave heart that ever scorned a lie,
That, in the slough of honest doubt, did cry
'Gainst sophistry of fools, whose "snuff of doubt"
Tried, from the universe, "to sneeze God out."

George Elliot, far better for mankind—
And sad it is for me to write these lines—
Would it have been, if only thy strange mind,
In which great strength with weakness sad, combines,
Had sought a purer channel, though obscure;
For human hearts have honor for the pure,
And, spite of sophistries of worshippers,
Our God will surely judge adulterers.

Earl Beaconsfield, although a certain tact
Supplied thy lack of talent, and the fact
Too often was obscured by falsehood's glare,
And glory more than duty was thy care,
Thy life will be a blessing to the land,
Which thou didst make thine own. A lesson grand
To all the world, will be the wifely love,
Which, with its tenderness, did strengthen thee
In thy long struggle up the scale of fame;

And, to the mind, at mention of thy name,
Will come a fond thought of the purity
And conjugal devotion, which did prove
A magic shield to ward off shafts of hate;
And men will mark that from thy loss did date
Thy years so full of blunders. In the light
Of th' honesty of Gladstone and of Bright,
Thy faults are seen so clearly, that they are
Of danger void, because seen from afar.

Dean Stanley, kind unto thine enemies,
And honest even in thine heresies,
Our eyes, unto thy faults, by love are blinded;
And, at thy name, we'll ever be reminded
Of thy sweet graces,—piety without
Harsh bigotry, and learning freed from doubt.

Yes, all who speak the English tongue, may well
Mourn for the fallen, and united pray,
That the stern woodman, Death, may never fell
Such noble landmarks in so short a day.

THOUGHTS ON READING BYRON.

Man is a mystery unto mankind.
He plumes himself the lord of all the earth,
And, for such office, shows but little worth
Upon the surface, and far less the mind
Discloses. In its inmost nooks, we find
But jarring discords hourly giving birth
To hopeless bitterness or impious mirth.

Such were the thoughts that filled my soul with
blind,
Dull heaviness of pain, which, would it ache,
Might be less hard to bear, after I spent
An hour with Byron, unique son of song,
Who warbled notes, the sweetest that do make
The heart thrill with emotion, and then went
To sing the vices and the lusts which throng
His miserable existence. Oh, the wrong
Of such a life seems hellish in the light
Of the chaste fancy of some lovely song!
The lust, the blasphemy, the moral blight
Of sensuality, beside the white
Glimpses of pureness, reverence and Heaven,
Seem far more devilish! *Man* is he whose might
Conquers his passions, guards what virtue's given,
While he who does not is a *brute*, by instinct driven
Now to a shocking crime, now to a generous deed;
And, as the generous glow, so is th' enormity
Of the offense. Almighty God, to Thee I plead
For strength to shield my soul from sin's deformity.

DEPARTURE.

Oh, may the truth inspire me, while I prove
The lasting, deep simplicity of love!
Yea, earthly love, pure, grounded, undefiled,
Like that which glowed in Eden, when there smiled
Jehovah's fond approval of the pair
Whom he created to be lovers there.
Ay, it was paradise, and it will be,

Ev'n is, when any heart contains the three:
The love of God, the father of all love,
Higher than all, and lifting us above
The possibility of damning lust,
The love of kindred, set in perfect trust,
And that best mortal love, the love of one,
With whom 'twere bliss, in common course to run.
These in the heart will kill the demon, hate,
So that, o'erflowing with one's blissful fate,
His love expands, until all human kind
A tender thought have in his noble mind,
And, knowing every honeyed sweet that's there,
He wishes all, of love's pure fount, to share.
  Sad is the scene my muse must now portray,
Sad, yet in after life the sweetest day
That memory paints upon the walls of time,
A parting scene, when parting seems a crime,
When the young heart, in his warm throbbings, feels
That death upon the loved one surely steals,
And he to be away, where love cannot
By word or deed alleviate the lot
Of one he loves with all his noble heart,
How sad that duty causes such to part!
  Upon a couch, a faded form, yet fair,
At least, unto the eyes that centered there.
A holy calm was always on her brow,
No murmur could her faithful heart allow,
Although the torments of disease did play
Along the wasted form marked for decay.
The sinking thought, that common earthly joys
Were not for her, did not disturb the poise
Of her love-balanced temper. Oh, how strong
The weakest soul that doth to Christ belong!
But, why this use of words? Words are not things,
And what reality the pencil brings
Is but the shadow by the night-orb cast.

Whose soul feels not, O Father, what Thou hast
Promised and done, can never realize,
The patient strength of that dear girl, nor prize
The constancy that from her Saviour comes,
The happiness that in affliction hums
Its hymn of adoration to its God,
The humble bending to his slightest nod.
All that the lips can frame that just would be,
She lived for Christ and for eternity.
Her brother was a *man*. She, at least, thought
He was a *noble* man, whoe'er did not.
He ne'er could be too kind or true to her.
Strong both his will and his affections were.
She knew the depth of his fond heart—she knew
To love and Heaven he was forever true;
And, when his heart would sink beneath the scorn
Of worldlings and the deep reproaches, born
Of hatred or of patronizing love,
She would direct his thoughts to Him above,
Whom men did scorn and heap reproaches on,
Till angry thoughts, if any were, had gone,
And soothe his troubled mind with sympathy,
And fill his soul again with courage high
To buffet with the world. Friendship he gave
To all and ever true. His heart was brave,
To bear reproaches, rarely to return,
To let his indignation inly burn.
In all his life, this truth he held as sure;
Love may be passionate, but it is pure,
Lust is not love, but is the cream of sin,
And, if not born of, kindleth hate within.
So to the world he seemed heartless and cold
But, to the cherished few, who were enrolled
Upon the tablets of his throbbing heart,
He seemed the noblest product of Heaven's art.
I know, indeed, it is the common thing,
A hero without any faults to sing;

And, if we take the dicta of that school
Which snubs poor Pope and thereby plays the fool,
It is the proper thing: for 'tis, I'm sure,
The sole soul of imagination pure.
Now poetry, to me, is but the shade,
Of real life, of living youth and maid,
Of thoughts that throb and burn within the soul
In spite of reason and her firm control:
Therefore, my hero has his faults, although
I think it is not right—in fact I know
That it is not—to dwell upon them long,
Ay, not at all, except that we be strong
To shun his sins; and, in this humble lay,
I think 'tis proper but to show the way,
In which the God-like in man is engendered,
And Satan's hold of him in time surrendered.
In sweet communion passed the moments by;
The lips may lag, when love beams from the eye,
For purest bliss cannot take verbal form,
And calms more awful are than any storm:
But, when the moment came, with steady hand,
Fondly he pressed those wasted fingers, and,
With a pet name, which use had sanctified,
Laid them again by the dear sufferer's side;
And then was gone, while she lifted her heart
To God in prayer, that He who took man's part,
Suffering death, the penalty of sin,
Would guide her brother through this mad world's din,
So that, if not before, him she might see
In the glad æons of eternity.
Then, as a loneliness weighs down her soul,
And o'er her sinking spirits coldly roll
Wave after wave, list, mortal, to the cry
Of the lone heart unto her Friend on high:—
"O Jesus, Consoler, I realize now
"The agony bursting in blood from thy brow,

"When disciples forsook, and demons defied Thee,
"And, nailed to the cross, even thieves did deride Thee,
"When Thou didst for mankind drain the bitter cup, death,
"The withdrawal of God. Oh, may my last breath,
"Like a sweet-smelling savor ascend to the Lord!
"For salvation complete—oh, beatified word!—
"Is mine through faith in the Crucified,
"And the fountain that flowed from his riven side."

Yes, he was gone, but he must say good by
To her whose presence lighted up his eye
With the chaste glow of self-forgetting love.
For one sweet moment, like a frightened dove,
The darling rested on his manly breast,
And, in the pain of parting, fondly pressed
Her fair young cheek upon her lover's face,
With secret prayer unto high Heaven for grace,
That even death might not their courses part.
'Twas but a moment; for, with throbbing heart,
Commending his dear sister to her care,
And breathing for them both an earnest prayer,
And kissing her good bye, he went away,
While in his mind these burning thoughts held sway:

"*Mine.* 'Tis the sweetest, solemn word
"That mortal ear hath ever heard,
"'Tis the most sweet, subduing thought
"The mind e'er to existence brought.
"Oh, give me grace, Almighty Lord!
"To me fulfill thy gracious word,
"That the twin devils, Self and Lust,
"May never mar the perfect trust
"My love and I do now enshrine
"In the blest syllable—mine, *mine.*"

The effervescence of this rapturous thought,

And the deep agitation, which it wrought,
Though for a moment only, were not vain.
They raised his life into a higher plane.
Henceforth, whatever path he may pursue,
The love of God and man will be in view.
These words, which he upon a fly leaf penned,
Show of his life what is the after trend:—
The flesh is weak. O Father, give me strength
To do my humble duty, and, at length,
When this brief prelude to eternity
Is lost in the deep surges of the sea
Of the hereafter, may my epitaph
Truthfully be the following paragraph:—
Here lies the vacant time-worn tenement
Of one, who strove t'attain the government
Of self, who, with a love for God and man,
Joyed to submit unto Jehovah's plan
Of sweet salvation,—Jesus to confess,
And daily strive to grow in holiness.

AN HUSBAND'S DAY-DREAM.

The dreams of day are on me. Darkly steal
The clouds of bitterness, oppressive, thick;
The gloom of hell is brooding o'er my soul;
Rebellious hate is poisoning my heart;
And devils seem to animate my thoughts,
Following the inclinations of my mind,
Like vultures hovering o'er an army's rear
With human gore to gorge themselves anon.
Almighty God, why should thy creatures live
In such extremities of woe and pain,
As some who seem of an etherial mould?

A nymph-like form hushed my soliloquy ;
And, as it nearer drew, it seemed the shade
Of her, the goddess of my youthful days,
To whom I gave the worship God alone
Can ask without the stain of blasphemy.
With noiseless step, she glided into view,
And, from her bloodless lips, in hollow tones,
Unearthly, but as soft as Zephyrus,
Cold, but as sweet as honey from the rocks,
Terrific, but as calm as heaven's own blue,
Well-earned rebuke and pure monition came :—
"Child of the dust, let not thy heart repine,
"Nor murmur 'gainst thy wise Creator's plan.
"With God thy help, fight boldly for the right.
"Down with the legions of debasing lust!
"In chaste companionship of her thou lov'st,
"Live for thy God and for humanity ;
"And, in the little circle of thy life,
"The innocence of Heaven emulate.
"Forget not that the weal of future time
"Depends upon the parents of to-day.
"Scan thy own life, nor leave in ignorance,
"Moved by a false and shame-faced modesty,
"Thy offspring. Let me tell a simple tale,
"To point the moral which I now would teach,
"To drive thee, by its ghastliness, away
"From popular delusions hell-conceived.
"A child was born ; no matter where the place,
"Enough that he was beautiful beyond
"The ordinary bounds of comeliness,
"And, as the common saying is, as bright
"As babes are wont to be, was the sweet boy.
"He grew apace and soon could romp about,
"The idol of his parents and the life
"Of all the neighborhood ; but—woe is me!—
"Mistaking ignorance for innocence,
"They left him without knowledge of the plans,

"Ordained by God to fortify man's health
"And to perpetuate terrestrial life.
"He was too young to hear or read of aught
"On which Dame Fashion puts the social ban,
"So, without proper warning, he was thrust,
"Unarmed by knowledge, out upon the cold,
"Unfeeling influence of a wicked world.
"Alas! All know the mercy of that world.
"Mercy! O God, the swarthy fiends of Hell
"Had not that darling child induced to sin
"A sin which would have crimsoned Satan's cheek;
"But, borrowing God's own livery to serve
"Th' arch-fiend of Hell, some youths, (give them their due,
"They little thought how largely burdened were
"Their deeds with deep damnation to the boy),
"By obscene practice (shrink I from the name?
"Yes, I need not this modest age offend;
"For nearly all, in the best school, have learned
"The practice well enough to need no name),
"Led him, through admiration of their age,
"And of their manhood, so apocryphal,
"To imitate their so-called secret vice,
"Which, to the eye of knowledge, showed itself
"In penthouse eyes and foul corrupted skin.
"Great God, how can the fiend assume the garb
"Of the seraphic host of Heaven! The boy
"Thought himself manly. Bow thine ear, hell-doomed,
"Blush that thy minions have out-deviled Hell,
"Have undermined the innocence of youth,
"So that the former cherub now can feel
"The glow of lustful pride at acts which bring
"Sickness and death—ay, worse than death on earth
"And in eternity the woes of Hell.
"The daily crime went on; at first, foul sores
"Bore witness to the cultivated lust;

"Then eyes were bleared, and shrunk the wretched wight,
"With shame instinctive from the gentler sex;
"At last, his memory began to fail.
"In this stage of his loathsome malady,
"A schoolmate, with vindictive malice, flung
"Full in his face a taunt too base for me
"To utter. How it burned in his young heart
"For until now, he was in ignorance
"Of both the cause and the effect so dire
"Of his low sensual habit. Now it flashed,
"With painful suddenness through his dull brain.
"This was the reason Grace avoided him.
"He saw it now, and with what will he had,
"Resolved to struggle with the demon, Self.
"And such a struggle—oh, the agony!
"The daily torture of eternal strife
"With iron habit and o'erpowering lust!
"The thought of her he loved, his darling Grace,
"At times, put strength into his wavering soul;
"For love is strong to battle for the right.
"For days, he would temptation overcome,
"And then the force of habit and the hot
"Desire of cultured sensuality
"Would make him wallow in that mire of vice.
"I cannot name half the ingenious modes,
"By which he strove t'annihilate his crime,
"While she, for whom he travailed in his soul,
"Disdained the wretch's love with infinite
"Dismay and to his infinite despair.
"Now renegades from virtue aye have been
"The most degraded beasts, and this poor youth,
"The remnant of his will all quite destroyed
"By his unearthly burden of despair,
"Became a reprobate ten times more vile:
"And, to make short my story, by degrees
"His reason was dethroned, and, in the dark

"Chaos of damning thought, action died out,
"And left a void. The residue of life
"(What mockery to call it life) was spent
"In an uncleanly almshouse, where he was
"A wonder to the vulgar, and a cause,
"To the informed, of pity, heartfelt, true,
"For the foul, idiot monstrosity.
"This is not overdrawn, frail child of dust,
"Therefore consider well the infinite
"Responsibility that rests upon
"The parent. Heed my warning to the end."
Th' admonitory spectre did not glide
Away; but melted into air, while I,
Shaking the day-dream from me, left the room,
And re-commenced the duties of the day.

Perhaps 'twas indigestion woke
Strange fancies in my hero's soul,
Still it is meet that all invoke
Some similar control.

THE WHITE ROSE.

THE INVOCATION.

I.

Hail Muse! That is, I think, the proper phrase,
Sanctioned by all heroic lays,
T'invoke Calliope safely to guide
Wild Pegasus into the upper haven.
Though for it some may wish to tan my hide,
I do affirm I'm not inclined to rave on
The Muse or any other lady fair.
That may be overlooked in careless youth;

But, when one's goose-quill is weighed down with
care,
Some things are more important then, forsooth.

II.

Then, too, I do not like the Muse's birth.
Jove's daughter should not stoop to drive a don-
key.
Her mother, Memory, had little worth.
In fact, she was no better than a monkey.
Her stock in trade was nothing but grimaces,
For all the things of eld she told by making faces.
Now Memory has not the least to do
With poesy—so Byron teaches us—
Why in the name of sense, kind friends, think you
Do bards about her brat make such a fuss?

III.

My Pegasus, I know, is somewhat lame,
Spavined; and, if the hay perchance be dry,
The heaves full often brings him into shame:
Still, he is quite a nag—or else I lie.
He surely does not need a maid to drive him!
At time he's balky, once he ran away,
But he is aged, and I guess I'll shrive him.
He'll be all right if I but wet his hay
And give him grain; but I am wandering,
Steady, my Pegasus, I'll try your wing.

IV.

While my old nag prepares to start,
I'll quiet fears by opening my heart.
(A free translation, if you please, to this;
For in a literal sense 'twould cause some pain.)
I think an epic would be quite amiss;
But, that the public may not weep in vain,
I'll say that I have one begun.
'Twill fill a royal quarto when it's done.

My style, I'm sure would please an Aristotle.
My hero I've preserved in a quart bottle.
He'll take a trip to Hell in the sixth canto,
I've stowed it all away in my portmanteau.
But lo! my Pegasus is getting steady.
I'll sing an idyl now, if you are ready.

FIRST CANTO.

I.

Through the settled sea of gloom,
Black as the darksome pit of doom,
A ray of light cleft its bright way,
  Like that which first on Chaos fell,
  Or like the tainted hues in Hell,
When angels of light were led astray
  By pride, and, for their foul sins fell
Into the sulphurous, black abyss,
The meet reward of sinfulness.

II.

That ray from an apartment came,
Where youths, who felt the glowing flame
Of aspiration, bravely tried
T' accomplish that for which they sighed.
They loved the ideal days of old;
  Desire begets reality,
  They had their code of chivalry,
  Their bard, who sang quite tunefully,
And much that need not here be told,
Suffice it that their ardent hearts
(Alas, that ardor oft departs!)
Would put that chivalry to shame,
  Which oft disgraced itself with crimes,
  That, ev'n in these degenerate times,
Would shock our modesty to name.
O Modesty, when shall thy name
  Be coupled not with taunts and scorn;

But with the thoughts of honest fame
  Pluck life's sweet rose and shun the thorn?
True love is that which makes man be
  Th' antith'sis of the marble bust.
Ye Modesty and Chastity,
  Twin sisters, save us from dire lust.
Oh, for the time, when ye shall reign
  Without a rebel in your realm;
And them, who treat you with disdain,
  May sure damnation overwhelm,
Unless, before your throne, they sue
For grace, and their vile nature rue!

III.

These noble youths, I will describe,
If bold Prometheus I can bribe
To steal, once more, celestial fire
  And this time share with me.
Thus, perchance, I might acquire
  Sufficient mastery
Of that entrancing play of words,
More brilliant than the fairy birds,
By which such souls as Homer, Scott,
Almost surpass frail mortal's lot,
Painting, with vivid, truthful hues,
The characters they choose to use.

IV.

At one end of the table, sat
A person neither thin nor fat.
His was a well proportioned frame
And beauteous brow. Claude was his name.
He would have made a model king;
  For all instinctively did pay
  Their homage to him. He was gay,
Determined, too, in every thing;
But lacking that intuitive

And magic wit, which ev'n will give
The bondman immortality.
Let someone form designs for him,
And he could execute with vim.
As to originality,
It troubled him but very little.
Full often dignity is brittle,
But him it fitted like a coat,
Or like a glove on lady's hand.
He had all qualities, on which I dote.—
Polite, good, classical, and grand.

V.

He read from 'The Select Orations,'
Tully's deep burst of eloquence,
Th' expression of his detestations
Of Verres' guilt, and foul defense.
Unoped, before him lay
Felicia Heman's works complete;
For he adored (as striplings say,
When they are at some damsel's feet)
The lady poet's minstrelsy,
Whose florid insipidity
Gives way at times unto the tide
Of sickening, pedantic pride
More rarely still unto the rays
That blaze up in seraphic lays.

VI.

Upon his right, there was a boy,
Whose jovial humor no alloy
Debased, he bore the name of one—
Whose conquering legions chased the sun
Unto the verge of that vast river,
Which ancients said surrounded Earth—
Julius. Within his mental quiver,
Were numerous arrows of strange worth:—

High-strung impetuosity,
A vivid sense of right and wrong,
A noble generosity,
Which made him darling of the throng,
A love of music, and, (how strange!)
A hatred of fair poesy,
A happy liberality,
Which gave his thoughts a boundless range,
A fear of God, a love of man,
A frankness verily refined.
Of manhood, he was in the van,
His body matched his spacious mind.
He pored the well-thumbed pages o'er,
Of Julius Cæsar's Commentaries.
He read it not as classic lore,
Nor with the eye of antiquaries,
But as a mute, yet kindly friend—
Why should he not? old Julius wrote it.
Although, for sooth, he'd rarely quote it,
Still it he tired not to commend.
He judged, and justly, we should look
At all the phases of a question;
For oft, he thought, our judgments took
Decisions from a mere suggestion.
Cæsar, he deemed, was far ahead
Of other Romans of his day,
As bold and daring, and, too, led
By promptings nobler far than they,
More generous and patriotic.
This virtue was not an exotic,
As some have claimed, but native born;
And ne'er can patriotism scorn
Such glorious nativity.
All virtues, sooth, did not adorn
His brow—the rose will have its thorn—
And he had vices of dark dye.
Ambition filled his mighty mind—

Whose does it not? The playful wind
Will blow away without remission
Designs unbalanced by ambition.
Such was Julius' criticism
  Of him, who moulders in the dust.
He analyzed him like a prism,
  Sooth, his analysis was just.

VII.

Roland—a marked antithesis
  Was he unto his name,
Which is full sweet enough to kiss—
Sat at Claud's left with visage tame.
Pedantic was he in the extreme,
  And still his brain was an abyss
Of ignorance. As in a dream,
  He pondered The Anabasis.
I do not like to paint a devil,
  Ev'n for comparison with angels;
A man suits me, though at low level,
  Better than demons or archangels.
Now Roland was not wholly base,
  Although he was entirely human:
There was that mark upon his face,
  Which ever designates a true man.

VIII.

He was a young geologist,
Exploring prehistoric mist,
Reviewing ages learnedly—
  Azoic and Silurian:
Meanwhile, at times, came from his eye
  A twinkle epicurean.
He usually repressed this feeling,
  A manful and heroic work;
Still o'er him oftentimes came stealing
  An inclination deep to shirk.

IX.

I said that Roland was pedantic;
And, so he was, though quite *au fait*
On subjects geological.
No ignorance e'er drove him frantic,
When in that province he'd essay
To prove his theses theological.
When some poor dabbler in the science
Proclaimed the Darwin theory,
He always opened his defiance
With: "How on earth, sir, can it be
That man from apes has been evolved;
Rock-records leave the thing unsolved;
And could we ev'n the space o'erleap
Of full one-half our brain's dimension,
Still would the powers that never sleep
To save our tails make intervention."
If this sage thought did not prevail,
He argued, still about the tail:
"Now sir, why should one ape forego
His tail, when the others did not so?
It is a foolish thing to question
Your high authority, I know.
It will not do to offer the suggestion
That God is right and Darwin is not so.
Know then, fair sir, all follow fashion;
And any ape would be a rash one,
Should he resign his coat of arms,
First 'mong his tribe's so numerous charms,
And, if he had the courage meet
For such a bold, dare-devil feat,
He would loose caste among his mates,
And die a victim to the fates."

X.

In front of Claud was Blondel, he,
The soul of burning minstrelsy.

Like him, whose honored name he bore,
His constancy and heaven-born lore
O'er lesser hearts held boundless sway.
As the stars reverence the day,
So baser minds before him bowed
And hailed him sovereign of the crowd.
Now monarchs, aye, must hope to find
Not love but churlish hate confined
Only by fear or thoughts more base.
Thus, when he sang, with smiling face
All joyed to hear his song;
And some, with not a stolen grace,
His praises would prolong.
Others, led on by thoughts of pride,
Most heartily, though foully vied
In injuring his fair fame;
And, with most loathsome treachery,
In private gossip, hellishly,
Tacked slanders on his name!

XI.

He—so disgusted with the thought,
That Satan to such depth had brought
A human soul—but rarely caught
The phœnix form of indignation;
And, when he did, his exultation
Sank ever to despondency,
Then, with deep sorrow, he would sigh,
Sigh for the love, the world gave not,
Disconsolate, mourn his sad, sad lot,
Till sadness caused satiety:
And, filled with vague anxiety,
He'd try to deaden his heart's pain
By thoughtless stupor; but in vain!
He could not stifle his wild brain,
And, then, in impotent disdain
At his own weakness, he would seize

His pen, and, like the rising breeze,
Trace off such glowing phantasies,
As burning Sappho might have sung.
Thus with his pen the knell he rung
Of sorrow, while, with lighter air,
He saw sweet Hope, with drapery fair,
Rise from the ashes of Despair.

XII.

He could take lead in merriment;
But still there lurked a discontent,
"A something sad to look upon."
When he, the cap of mirth did don,
A careless eye would not perceive
That he did, or could ever grieve;
But, when the laugh or conversation
Lulled, in that time of relaxation
A shadow settled on his brow,
Still, spite of all, 'twas calm enow.
Lo! wake him from that lethargy;
And mark the flashing of his eye,
As, with a vivid wit and true,
He gives each jackanapes his due,
Or, smiling with sarcastic scorn,
Makes serpents wish they'd not been born,
Or, with a natural courtesy,
Does his beloved friends outvie.
Sooth, he was one all might admire,
And few could love, scarce one desire,
All joyed his favors oft to see,
And thanked their God they were not he.

XIII.

Upon the night of which I speak—
It was when winter kissed the cheek
Of Nature with the biting frost,
When vegetation seemed all lost,

And Death 'peared victor in the strife—
Blondel read eagerly the life
Of Gallia's peerless conqueror
By Scott, the painter of dire war,
Who in that line is equalled not
By anyone of mortal lot.
Upon the table, he had laid
A poem he that eve had writ;
And, by its side, as if to aid
Him, while he was composing it
Were Byron's poems opened wide,
Where Chillon's saddened prisoner sighed.

XIV.

Richard sat close at Blondel's right,
Watching his friend in calm delight;
For, like the famous Blondel's patron,
He loved him better than a matron
The bonny child her bosom pillows.
Perhaps, amid life's warring billows,
You may have heard of the close band,
Which bound, in sympathy most grand,
Bold Cœur de Lion and the poet;
If not, I'm sure you ought to know it.

XV.

It is a glorious tale, I ween,
How valor did to bard demean,
Showing the utmost confidence
In his supremely magic sense,
Giving the love naught could retard
To the sweet-tongued, provencial bard;
And still more glorious is the tale
Of the bard's constancy, his wail
Over his master's wayward fate.
Who has not heard how long he sought
Him who in Palestine had fought

"The listed field of Ascalon?"
How he his object strangely won?
But why should I so stupidly,
To tell the glowing story, try,
When she, who sang of wild Dartmoor,
And won the prize for minstrel lore,
Has, with a matchless art, portrayed,
How Blondel long o'er Europe strayed,
Finding at last his royal master,
And saving him from dire disaster?
Go, read that poem to the end,
And see, if she does not amend
Her fame, oft tarnished by the dew
Of tasteless, roseate imag'ry,
Lacking that—without which but few
Admire a work—vitality.

XVI.

My Richard, like the Lion Hearted,
The size and strength, which alway started
What obstacles soe'er opposed him,
Had in full meed. No one e'er dozed him.
Good-natured was he, somewhat slow—
I should say calm; for well I know
He fast enough could execute
Meet justice on each dastard brute.
Rarely he spoke—except to him,
The friend whose smile aye grew not dim,
When in fond discourse they engaged—,
When he did speak, he struck the spark
Ev'n on the roughest hearts of flint
By some quaint saying, wisely dark,
Or humorous yet biting hint.

XVII.

'Tis passing strange and yet 'tis true,
He was the only intimate

Of him, whose friends, I trow, were few,
Though all, his praises high did rate,
When in his presence. In his hand,
While he did at good Blondel look,
He held th' 'Arabian Knights,' and land!
Before him lieth 'Lalla Rookh.'
On such stuff does he feed his mind?
No; but to rest when he's inclined,
He likes those airy narratives,
In which, full dreamily, one lives,
While cares take wing and fly away,
As mushroom bards are wont to say.

XVIII.

Roland called out: "How can you brook
Such nonsense as that Lalla Rookh?"
"I'm not," was Richard's sole reply.
"Good answer that, at least, say I,"
Said Claud, "for ev'n your placid eye
Might see unnoticed it doth lie."
"Like Curtius I will fill the breach;
Since you'll not listen if I preach"—
Said Julius—Claud cried, "Rent a hall"—
"I will," quoth Julius, "if you'll gage
Your ears that you will take the stage.
You'd make a first-class elfin page,
Like him whom Scott from Hell did call,
Or from his brain's romantic cage;
But banter not with me to-night:
I spoke but to set matters right.
Now I suggest, with that good aim,
Our bard stir up his minstrel flame
And give us to arouse our glee
Some story of 'high chivalrie.'"

XIX.

When Roland ope'd the conversation,

A glance—meet cause of consternation—
Cast Blondel on him. The reply
Of Richard changed to mirth his eye,
His lip curled with sarcastic joy;
But sadness soon did it destroy,
And, with his head bent on his breast,
As if by direful thoughts oppressed,
Or sunk in silent melancholy
By memory of some secret folly.
He noticed not what Julius said,
Till Richard whispered in his ear:
"Wake now, the song we love to hear.
Let them not see the color fled
From thy bold brow. Oh, make them feel
The joy thy harmonies reveal!"
In answer, he smiled thankfully;
And, with calm, haughty dignity,
Thus spoke: "Friends, if you wish a lay
Of listed field or battle fray,
Wait for it till some other day.
I laud not scenes so foully gay.
So, please you, I will read some lines,
Where earnestness with joy combines,
In fanciful, yet true array,
To drive dull weariness away."
So saying, he, with accents fit,
Declamed what he that night had writ.

XX.

ANACREON'S ROSE.

"One can guess of what rose Anacreon sung,
'Twas the rose on whose petal the pure color hung,
The rose that seemed washed in the morning dew,
Till naught but pure loveliness greeted the view;
Yes, 'the rose of the loves' no other could be,
Than that which seems holy to thee and to me.

"Since then, love, each lyrical bard that has been
Has thought it, no doubt, to the angels akin.
Its angelic beauty so pure and so white,
Like a spot of sweet Heaven in the midst of our night
Oft has raised in my mind a rapt'rous delight.
"I have loved it because it is pure in itself,
And has turned my own thoughts from the world and its pelf;
But far greater love have I given to it,
Because to my eye it doth alway transmit
A reflection of beauties that ever sit
With pleasing grace on thy noble brow.
"I have loved thee for years, darling, God knoweth how;
But why essay of my love to tell,
When I my unworthiness know so well?
Lo! I come to thee, as a knight to his queen,
And ask for thy love, which thou canst give, I ween.
If thy favor thou grantest, this blossom white
Wear upon thy breast, when we meet to-night."

XXI.

With glance of fire, the minstrel ended,
And silence o'er the scene descended.
Rapt, gazing into vacancy,
As if, before his glowing eye,
Bright visions spread their pageantry,
Blondel remained, until he heard
Such praise as ev'n his bosom stirr
Richard entranced, said not a word;
But Julius, with impulsive start,
Essayed to sound the poet's heart:
"I like thy simile full well,
Although, for sooth, it does not tell
Of errant knight or damosell,

If it can thus awake thy song,
My guess, perchance, may not be wrong—
Bold metaphor would best prolong
Thy brilliant, life-like minstrelsy,
Which should, I ween, be wholly free."
Now Blondel ill that jest could brook;
And, with a kind yet piercing look
At Julius, he began again.
This time, like the old harper-men,
With voice as sweet, and mien as coy,
As Andes' farmer's sickly boy.

XXII.

SONG OF THE WHITE ROSE.

"Why should I tune my voice again?
  Why sing once more of the White Rose?
Why did she ever guide my pen,
  Where amaranthine verdure grows?
Why should my youthful fancy choose
A theme so far beyond my muse?

"The Teian bard has sung of love;
  But O! could he have dreamed of thee,
His verse had grandly soared above
  Voluptuous sensuality:
For all the dreams of the ideal
Are tame beside thy beauty real!

"My soul is rapt in thoughts of thee,
  Thou magnet of my longing heart;
And, in my brain, for aye will be
  A love from which I cannot part.
Oh, in the world, is naught so pure
As thou, my lovely cynosure!

"My darling, at thy 'proving glance,
  Each knightly heart doth leap with pride,

And wish that he could couch a lance
In listed field for such a bride;
And truly, never field was won
For bluer eyes than thine, sweet one.

"Yes, I must love thee, peerless Rose,
With an untiring constancy,
Which, till the end of life's cold woes,
For naught except thy weal can die.
If e'er thy weal that cross demand,
The sacrifice I'll proudly stand!"

XXIII.

Julius, who could not silent be,
Thus spake with generous ecstacy:
"That is a song to suit my mind.
True love with faithful honor twined.
And well I ween, your blue-eyed flower
Must be a queen with fairy power;
For Stella is the only one,
Of mortal mould, that I have seen,
Who could such conquering have done,
And her, of course, you could not mean."
From Blondel's cheek the blood did fly,
Calm and undaunted was his eye,
It passed unnoticed; for with gleam
Of pleasure, Claud took up the theme:
"In some old novel, I have read:
How, in the good Queen Bess's reign,
Some gallants, by the boy-god led,
Finding their loves would be in vain,
Established th' order of the Rose,
All bound to serve her to the close.
Now, I suggest, we organize
A brotherhood with like emprise.
With us, Rose would not be a name;
But symbol, common to our flame,

Of chastity and peerless worth
And all that makes us love the earth."

XXIV.

"We, brethren of the White Rose, swear
To succor innocence and bear
Whate'er our Rose on us shall put,
Ev'n if it doth our hearts uproot,
And make each brother's good our own.
If we prove recreant to our trust,
May all the fiends 'round Satan's throne
Torture and damn our hated dust."

XXV.

As Claud concluded, Roland cried,
"Amen," with eagerness and pride.
Julius, with more propriety,
Said, "yes" with rev'rent jollity.
Richard was like the Olympian god
And showed his will by just a nod.
Blondel, with brow as white as death,
Filled with emotion, held his breath
Until his turn, then sternly said;
"Fall double tortures on my head—
Ay, all the torments Hell can bring,
If I make not this oath my king."
All stood in awe, till Julius said:
"Our bardling has a level head!
Since it is meet to celebrate
Our oath, which bristles with high fate,
Let him pour forth the meed of song,
That doth to chivalry belong."
His visage fixed, his glowing eye
Fired with ambrosial delight,
Blondel deigned not to make reply;
But roused him with poetic might.

XXVI.

BLONDEL'S LAMENT.

"Sadly, ah! sadly, the time I am spending,
Slowly the hours creep by,
Darkness and gloom to the scene are now lending
Shadows, which after each other do fly.

"Black is the night and the thick clouds are flying
Over the face of the wintry sky.
Through the wierd boughs, the breezes are sighing,
As if the wind-fiend himself were nigh.

"Fit is the scene for the realm of some fairy,
Who loves to gaze where no light meets the eye.
Sadness the scene to my mind now doth carry,
As I sit by the window and hear the wind sigh.

"Sad is the landscape which shadows do cover,
Sadder the thoughts in my bosom that lie.
Heavy as lead is the heart of the lover
Whose love must be stifled or honor must die.

"Thinking am I of a form that is ever
Near me and causing my spirit to cry,
That naught but Death's hand from my vision can sever,
Full of sad thoughts and longings am I.

"Thoughts of my darling are all that will enter
My mind, as I cast upon heaven my eye.
O God! let love, of my life, be the center,
And I, on life's journey, will gladly hie."

XXVII.

As the bard ended, in his air,
Were hope and desperate despair,
Which had been frenzy, if his will

Had not held firm dominion still.
Oh, press no longer on the scene!
It has been sad enough, I ween.
O'erlook their thoughts, their passions all,
Let, for a time, the curtain fall.

SECOND CANTO.

I.

The summer days have grown so long,
  That night is like a pleasing dream,
So short we feel it is not wrong
  To wish the stars might longer beam.
But, when the fairy shades are gone,
  And the sun shoots its level rays
Upon the smoothly shaven lawn
  Or waving fields of emerald maize,
All nature wakes to joyous life.
And joins th' intoxicating strife
For future weal and happiness:
  The birds trill forth their lovely lays,
  The squirrel darts through greenwood maze,
And gentle Zephyrus doth caress,
With cooling lips each fragrant flower,
The fleeting jewel of an hour.
Man, only man, 'mid scenes like this
Can feel aught but perennial bliss!
He, sullen tyrant of the fell,
Lets damning thoughts within him dwell.
And, when the matin peace is spent,
  And fiercely glows the ruddy sun,
Unlike the god ignipotent,
  Who loved the lurid flame and dun,
He seeks a refuge in the woods
And lists the streamlet's varying moods.

II.

In the recesses of the wild,
Where wakes my feeble lay once more,
Murmuring like a wayward child,
Pursues its way the pebbles o'er,
A brook, which might have been the home
Of sea nymphs, who have aye forsaken
Their birth-place 'neath the ocean's foam,
That wizard beauty may awaken
Their native thirst for mystery
And luminous variety.
This brook, with graceful curve, encloses
An islet—to the neighboring men
As unknown as the grave of Moses—
A garden of delightful roses,
Its peer we ne'er will see again!
More glorious than the fabled flowers,
Of which the ancient poets tell,
The amaranth, the asphodel,
And the ambrosia, which did quell
The hunger in th' Olympian bowers,
Are the wild flowers, whose colors bright
Awake in us a glad delight.

III.

An oak, turned over by the storm,
A sort of rustic bridge doth form,
By which we may the island gain.
Pause, hear you not a pensive strain?
Yes, from the island it doth come,
And rising from a lowly hum
Pours forth a truly heart-felt hymn
With the sweet tone of seraphim!

IV.

VENI, SANCTE SPIRITUS.

"Holy Spirit, to my heart
Come, I open now to Thee.
Enter and do not depart,
Dwell eternally in me,
Let thy heav'nly flame inspire
Me with thoughts and deeds sublime,
Till, with rapt prophetic fire,
I can view the death of time.

"Oh, illume my darkened soul!
Teach me all my direful need,
Show me all the woes that roll
Crushing tides with restless speed—
Tides of woe, that always are
Rising in the guilty mind,
Burning like a molten star,
But forever close confined.

"Pause not then, O Guide divine,
Pause not, till, with loving care,
Thou hast made the Saviour mine,
Balm to heal my soul's despair.
Precious truth revealed by Thee,
Spirit of the most high God,
Fountain which doth cleanse ev'n me,
Hand, that lifts me from the clod!

"In this faith, oh, let me rest,
While a wanderer here below!
Let me, to thy gracious breast,
Father, when Thou call'st me, go.
Oh, the bliss of that last home!
Oh, the joy with Christ to be—
Through the golden streets to roam!
Hasten, O eternity!"

V.

With solemn rapture, dies away
The glowing words of praise and prayer,
As perfume of sweet new-mown hay
Floats off into the balmy air.
Step softly now and soon we'll see
Sitting beneath a maple tree,
Whose roots have formed a natural chair,
Whose branches wave in canopy,
Blondel?—yes, it indeed is he,
With pensive, but not sullen air,
While thus in deepest revery,
His lips shape this soliloquy:—

VI.

"'Just as I am, without one plea.'
Oh, can such words be meant for me!
Thank God, He gave me light to see,
That for myself I cannot plead,
That Christ alone my Rock must be.
'He will not break the bruisèd reed,'
Then surely I have naught to fear.
O! I adore Thee, Saviour dear;
For all my sins on Thee were laid,
By faith in Thee, I'm justified
For thy atoning blood has paid
The forfeit of my guilty pride.
Golgotha's awful tragedy
May well my rapt attention claim.
There Jesus died upon the tree
To save me from Hell's torturing flame.
My adoration cannot pay
One-half the debt to Him I owe,
Yet I have confidence to say
My contrite heart oppressed by woe
He has received, and I am blessed.
I trust Him and my soul doth rest."

VII.

He rises from his lowly seat,
And humble bends to God his knee;
And while birds sing their carols sweet,
In faith he prays full earnestly:
"O Father, who in heaven art,
Forgive and cleanse from sin my heart,
Strengthen Thou me for every trial,
Give me a godly self-denial,
Bless all my friends, forgive my foes,
Grant unto Stella's heart repose,
Make my life bless my fellow men,
In Jesus' name. Amen. Amen."

VIII.

Invigorated by the sweet
Communion of his soul with God,
He quickly stands upon his feet,
And gently glides across the sod.
He springs into a gay canoe,
And bends himself unto the oar,
While the isle passes from his view,
The following strain he doth outpour:

IX.

NEVERMORE.

"Not a word is known to human tongue,
Not a note by midnight fairy sung,
That tells to the heart so sad a lore
As the soul-thrilling accent—nevermore.

"In the midst of pleasure pure and sweet,
Fly the moments by with wings so fleet,
That sorrow enters and shuts the door,
And the pleasure returns to us—nevermore.

"At the bridal feast, when crownèd love
Gives a glimpse of Heaven, our home above,
Death strikes a blow at the fond heart's core,
And the twain are united—nevermore.

"But a pause I ask, the strain is sad:
There's a brighter side to make us glad;
For, when we reach the heavenly shore,
Its bliss shall leave us—nevermore."

X.

He springs to land, where, through the woods,
A path leads from the streamlet's bank
And loses self in solitudes,
Where tall trees cast their shadows lank.
He pauses not ev'n to survey
The beautiful yet sombre scene;
But rapidly pursues his way,
With musing, unimpassioned mien,
Abruptly now he turns around
A huge but thunder-smitten tree,
Whose trunk decaying cumbers ground,
Which, else, would show fertility.

XI.

He meets a maiden young and fair
With manners gay and debonair,
Why do they start? Why does the girl
Recoil with such embarrassed mien?
Why does the youth, with look of scorn,
Pass, as if her he had not seen?
Recovering her composure, she
Says: "Blondel, why so sullenly,
Do you pass by a faithful friend?"
"Do not, proud lady," he replies,
"Call yourself faithful—or amend
And change to truth your luring lies.

I own you are a faithful fiend.
The veil which your design has screened
Is rent asunder. Your disguise
Is proof no longer to my eyes."
"Dear Blondel, sooth, you do me wrong.
If aught I've done to rouse your ire,
'Twas that my love for you was strong
And hot the blaze of my desire."

XII.

"Silence, vile Gretta, name not love
With falsehood in your mouth and heart.
I was within the tree above
Your rendezvous with Helen Dart,
When, with the hiss of mortal hate,
You threatened me with awful fate,
And framed so damnable a lie
To beat it, Satan dare not try.
That baneful falsehood you have spread,
(Better for you had you been dead.)
Although unto distraction driven,
My curse to you is not yet given;
But oh, renounce your fearful crimes
And your forgiveness seek from Heaven:
For you have heard that oftentimes
A little lump the whole doth leaven.

XIII.

" 'God may forgive, I never can,'
Said England's virgin queen
To her, whose perfidy, I ween,
Brought death to a devoted man;
And, when I think that worse than death
Is life without a single hope,
My indignation has full scope,
And the queen's words come with my breath.
Go to that humble cottage home,

Where she, who called you once a friend,
Of yore as gay as ocean's foam,
Now wishes life to end.
Look upon Stella's pallid face,
Which shows of happiness no trace;
And, if that is not punishment
Enough to make ev'n you relent,
I'll show to your disgusting eyes
A scene so sad
Colored by such terrific dyes
As drive one mad.

XIV.

"Julius, whose equal does not live,
Dogged by your treacherous infamy,
Seeks amid varying scenes to give
Repose unto the thoughts that lie
Deep in his unsuspecting heart.
Indeed! and do I see you start?
Is there still feeling in that breast?
Is it by one poor pang oppressed?
Then, like the ghosts that did defy
The butcher King, let that one thought
Cry in your ear, 'Despair and die!'
To him insanity has brought
A dire relief from torturing pain.
Adieu. We never meet again."

XV.

With measured stride, he walks along,
Nor lists unto the bird's sweet song,
Nor sees the squirrel, as he leaps
From bough to bough, nor, as he creeps
Across his path, does he behold
The tiny sluggard of the wold.

XVI.

"How strange," he muses, "I should meet
Her in this lonely forest shade!
Strange she should try, by aspect sweet,
And blushes of a virtuous maid,
To lull suspicion. Does she think
She can delude me by a wink?
Lo! this reminds me of my vow.
Where are those jolly comrades now?
Claud has passed from my knowledge quite
And ta'en with him *his* Rose. As white
Is she, as any actual flower,
And just as useless, full as wise;
And what makes odd their mutual ties,
Is that to please, she lacks the power.

XVII.

"Roland, in spite of the demerits
And laziness, which he inherits,
Has won a wife as wise as he—
He owns it with rare courtesy—
And truly she is beautiful.
They'll make a noble team to pull
The weight of cares that is their load,
And *she* will never need the goad.
From close but general observation,
Although I claim not penetration,
I've noticed men are rarely equal
In goodness, wisdom and propriety,
But, when it comes unto the sequel,
The better half of unity
So fits the nature of the bolder half
That, though men frown, applaud or laugh,
The units all are equal:
And sweet felicity they quaff,
If true love, in its natural course,

Meets with nor fraud, deceit nor force.
He could see nothing but a rock,
Now he has gone to keeping stock;
And, how his pedantry can stoop
To hide itself in such a coop,
I cannot see—but it is thus.
  Kind-hearted Dick, you, too, have been
  Amatory almost to sin.
Ha! Richard Asiaticus
Would be a pretty name for you,
Though northern-born, your eyes are blue,
For I have most specific knowledge,
  Your black-eyed Houri now doth wait,
  To open joy's celestial gate
To you when you return from college.

XVIII.

"O Heaven! how can I think of him,
The strong in heart as well as limb?
Why did I ever live to see
  That noble mind to reason lost?
It surely will be sin in me,
  If I, no matter what the cost,
Be it my life, try not to gain
For him some respite from his pain.

XIX.

"O Stella, you the oath have heard,
  Which makes my devoir what you ask;
And, without guerdon, look, or word,
  You call me to a saddening task.
Hard it will be to give thee up,
  Sweet darling of my heart;
But He who drank the bitter cup,
  Will help me do my part.
Thy will be done, O Lamb of God!
  I bow before thy throne,

And walk o'er life's untraversed sod,
  Uncheered by love, alone:
Yet not alone, since thou hast said
  I will not thee forsake.
With Christ to guide, I'll boldly tread
  Ev'n the infernal lake.
Oh, grant my prayer, Thou Holy One!
  In the dark vale of life,
Though my course with her's may never run,
  And she ne'er be my wife,
Though human love be never mine,
  And I a wanderer be,
May I let the light that's in me shine
  Now and eternally.
O Christ, may I lead some soul to Thee,
  And quell the damning strife
Between the learn'd and piety?
  May I wear the crown of life?
Yes, I will do it—it is done,
The victory over self is won—
From my sad heart I tear away
That which has warmed its dawning day;
And, as a minstrel I have been
  In happier days,
So, in this time of woe and sin,
  I must pour forth my lays."

XX.

ADIEU TO THE WHITE ROSE.

"Thy day is spent, thy reign is o'er,
  Thou Queen of Honor and of Love,
And I must think of thee no more,
  Or think of thee as one above,
An angel, who has been my guide
But must not linger at my side.

"Thy last command, O peerless Rose,
Has laid my longings in the dust.
How deep my anguish no one knows,
Still I admit thy course is just;
For beauty seated on her throne
Should have one knight attend alone.

"If, haply, I be not that knight
In time of thy prosperity,
For thee it surely must be right
To spurn me in adversity,
My love for thee I do uproot,
I will not press on thee my suit.

"But, for my brother, I must try
All means to save him from the fate,
That clouds the zenith of his sky
And hides from him the heavenly gate.
Now must my voice sink to repose.
My heart bids thee adieu, White Rose."

XXI.

With firmness marked upon his brow,
And sadness in his eye,
The tuneful lay is ended now.
'Tis meet that it should die;
For he has reached the meadow land
That skirts the forest to the south,
Where clover, by the breezes fanned,
For moisture opes each tiny mouth.

XXII.

Our hero let us leave again;
For he has gained the haunts of men,
A shelter from the burning sun,
Whose downward course will soon be run.
Night then will settle on the earth

To wizard splendors giving birth.
The light from shadow scarce defined—
A parallel unto the mind—
Gives to each thing th' unearthly hue
Of fairies tripping o'er the dew.
And, if indeed, there be blithe fays,
  Who sleep away the noonday heat
And, when night drowns the feverish blaze,
  Dance on the lawn with flying feet,
With hearts as light as their tiny toes,
And perfume as sweet as a scented rose,
They will not do harm to those, that lie
Asleep beneath the brilliant sky;
They will not do harm to those, that wake
With throbbing heart for their lady's sake;
Nor will they do harm to the careless wight,
Who wanders abroad in the dreamy night,
So rest, sweet Blondel, there's naught to fear,
  When the star-fires twinkle in the sky;
Nor, when the sultry day doth appear,
  And nature languidly doth lie,
Panting for life 'neath the azure arch,
O'er which the sun pursues his march;
For he, whose conscience is void of offence,
Has fearlessness for his recompense.

THIRD CANTO.

I.

'Tis Christmas tide in days of eld,
His sway the Lord of Misrule held:
Baron and swineherd, in the keep,
With wines and ale, drank wassail deep:
The sacred spray of mistletoe
  In the center of the hall
Its magic cast on all below;
For the Druid plant, of course you know,

Has a mystic power in the festal hour:
The holly decked the oaken wall:
The gleeman, for the Saxon boor,
With rude alliteration, sung;
The trouvére and the troubadour,
In the Norman or Provencal tongue,
Poured forth their lays of the Table Round,
Or made the chilly air resound
With tales of love and chivalry:
The mammoth Yule-log burned as fast
As could the green trunk of a tree,
Perchance, by those who wished might last
The merry games and jollity,
Till Twelfth Day dawned upon the lea,
Soaked in the brook. Those days of cheer
Lightened privation through the year.
Now when the merry Christmas comes,
It is not as in olden times:
The Lord of Misrule bites his thumbs;
No minstrels range their their quaint wild rhymes,
Thanks to a righteous parliament!
Our model times are quite content—
Perhaps 'tis best that it is so—
To claim a quiet day of rest,
A relaxation of our woe,
A change to lull the ruffled breast;
Still, in this era of cold blood,
On Christmas eve, a perfect flood
Of recollections sweet and pure,
Of expectations not so sure,
Deluges quite our inmost soul.
Yes, he who does not feel the tide,
Of burning thought beyond control,
Of longings deep, unsatisfied,
When Christmas eve draws nigh,
Is far too dull to feel love's glow,

The sweetest, best felicity,
  Heaven-born, that man, on earth, may know.
For such poor clods, I do not rhyme—
May Heaven forgive me, if 'tis crime
To say that these are worse than stones,
Mere engines formed of flesh and bones,
Foul blots upon humanity;
But, you, whose thoughts can soar on high,
  And range at freedom on the heights
Of beauty and sublimity,
  Follow me in my 'venturous flights
Into the realm of glowing thought.

II.

'Tis Christmas eve: The fitful gloaming
  Is dying in the western sky;
  he tints of eventide are roaming
  'Long the horizon far and nigh.
Jessica sits, as in a dream,
  Gazing intently on the white
  Carpet of nature, twinkling bright
With many a soft bewitching gleam.
She is no fairy apparition
Seducing men to sure perdition,
No beauty of th' ethereal type
For curst, coquettish, trifling ripe,
Nor brainless, languishingly fair,.
The shame of womanhood, the snare
Of careless, open-hearted youth.
The personation of frank truth
Is she, and, to the artist's eye,
Although, at first, he may deny
Her comeliness and grace of form,
Her noble soul's affections warm
A pleasing study well may be,
As they illume her paucity

Of all that tends to vanity.
Yes, noble-souled and true is she,
Free from all selfishness and guile.
In proof, behold her dark brown eyes
Also her ever-present smile.
Oh, what composing beauty lies
In that plain form and thoughtful brow!
She might have been an Amazon;
But, that as her you gaze upon,
You see she's feminine enow,
Modest, retiring, but as firm
As——well, I cannot find a term
That can express one-half the thought
Those calm, fixed lips to life have brought.
Her hair, black as a thunder-storm,
In waves doth shroud the chiseled form
Of neck and shoulders, while, as oft,
Of thunder clouds, reflections soft
Play 'mid the ripples of a stream,
So her dark features alway teem
With shining wavelets from the heart.
Lo! as we look, full sweetly part
Her roseate lips, and, in a tone
Of simple strength and beauty, free
From simpering whine and idiot moan,
She bodies forth this revery.

III.

"My love, why tarry you so long?
You said that you would come at even.
Oh, has my darling suffered wrong,
That he delays our taste of heaven?
The stars are shining brightly, love,
The snow appears another sky;
But, splendid though the sight above
I cannot fix on it mine eye,

Because, brave heart, I die to see
Your manly form with step so free.
I love with all my strength of soul,
  It is my nature so to love;
But only he, whom I extol
  Has nobly dared to rise above
The prejudice of pride and passion,
Of gallants the eternal fashion,
And love me for the soul that's pent
Within this homely tenement.
His soul is noble, great, supreme
  O'er the weak follies of mankind.
He sees not women as they seem,
  But penetrates their secret mind.
And oh! to win his noble heart,
  Might be a woman's proudest aim;
  And Blondel—how I love the name!—
Says that our lives must never part.

IV.

"Here is his picture, which, once seen,
Haunts one for aye. His haughty mien
Is softened by a fond esteem
  For purity and holiness;
  And it suits me, I must confess,
To see some loftiness, I seem
To feel a pleasant elevation
Of spirit, a recuperation
Of intellectual energies,
By contact with the symphonies
Of soaring thought, which ever find
A place in my sweet Blondel's mind.

V.

"O! I forgot, he sent a book,
This morning, and not ev'n a look

Have I vouchsafed it. 'Tis a shame
His gift remains just as it came,
Unread, unnoticed and neglected.
'Tis Byron, Blondel's favorite poet;
And he has probably detected—
If not, 'tis queer he does not know it—
That I delight in what he likes.
What is it that my vision strikes?
Lines on the fly-leaf? Let me see
What has inspired his poesy."

VI.

THE LINES ON THE FLY-LEAF.

"O Byron, lord of satire and of song,
Thou too didst 'chant too often and too long.'
Hadst thou but spared the world thy lewd
Don Juan,
Which has o'erwhelmed thy name with damning ruin,
The world had ever hailed thee as the king
Of poesy, of satire's self the sting.
Still, though we shudder at thy life of sin,
We also know the human heart,
And, while we think of what our lives have
been,
Let sacred charity impart
A sympathy for that misanthropy
Which caused the noblest of mankind to be
A wanderer from his native shore,
In license and debauchery
Deadening the pain, which at his vitals tore,
Too proud to ask for pity, yet in need
Of that dear, soothing, and supporting hand,
By stern necessity compelled to plead
For justice to the waves and barren sand.
Ring down the curtain on his scenes of crime,

With fear commit them to the Lord of time,
Forget Don Juan, Beppo and the Vision,
And let us wander through the sights Elysian,
He spreads around him, when in happier mood,
Boundless as thought, sublime as solitude.
With Harold, let us wander through the lands,
That did inspire his misanthropic Muse;
Give to Parnassus what its age demands;
'Torn ocean's roar and thunder-storms peruse;
Discourse upon the crime of Waterloo;
Italia's plains and Hellas' mountains view;
And wonder at the admirable brain,
That could find poetry in—even Spain!
O'er Chillon's dungeon let us weep;
Or follow the impetuous sweep
Of his wild Giaour, when the Friar
Is shocked by his fierce passion's fire:
Or watch the airy ghost or shade
Which daunts the desperate renegade;
And, when the beauteous form doth fade,
Follow him through the battle field
And see the ghastliness revealed
Of mangled and decaying dead:
Or, tiring of such sights as these,
Turn to 'The Hebrew Melodies,'
And soothe the heart till awe is fled."

VII.

"'Tis beautiful," she says, "and just"—
Then starts from either fear or pride;
But a fond smile of perfect trust
Greets Blondel, standing at her side.
Her hand he kisses lovingly.
He never was demonstrative,
As some, who swear they cannot live
Without their sweethearts. Playfully

He seats himself. With solemn face,
He says, "The giver you forgot,
While looking at his gift, I wot,
Such gratitude is out of place."
Archly she answered: "Laggard boy,
With my affection thus to toy
Is wrong. I waited long for you.
Had you been here at proper time,
My eyes had not been wet with dew
From the perusal of your rhyme."
"Jessica, darling, I am sad.
Though paradoxical it seem,
I'm happy too. I sometimes deem
My life has been a troubled dream;
But I have waked, and I am glad
That God has given me such sweet
Enjoyment of my present life.
Past sorrow from me will retreat,
When I can call you, love, my wife.
To-night, to make my rest complete,
I've seen my labors well requited—
Julius' and Stella's hands united
In nature's first and sweetest tie
Of unalloyed felicity."

VIII.

"My Blondel, tell me all the story;
For, in your goodness, love, I glory.
I joy to think how true a man,
One who is ever in the van
Of nature's noble men, is mine:
And, 'round your name, my love, I twine
A wreath of bright forget-me-nots
And laurels, which your fame allots."

IX.

"In pity do not flatter me,"
Says Blondel with fond gravity,
"I've tried to follow duty's path,
And reaped the bitter fruits of life;
But now the tender aftermath
Of blessed love and rest from strife,
With perfumes sweet, and blossoms bright,
Pleases my sense and glads my sight.
As to the story, you must know
The cause of this commingled woe.
I've told my boyish admiration
Of Stella to you once before.
You know my impious adulation,
The product of infatuation,
Which made me rash—if nothing more.
You know the curst malevolence
Of Gretta—God be her defense
And save her on th' eternal shore:
For, if the devil e'er inspired
A mortal with the wiles of Hell,
'Twas she; but, if she has acquired
God's pardon, all is well.
Our order of the White Rose had
Been organized some time,
When me, I trust an honest lad,
She charged with loathsome crime.
She whispered Julius in the ear,
With knowing look and frown severe,
Till he, from home and comrades, sped.
You know the rest, how reason fled.
I found him in a wretched state,
Forgotten were both love and hate,
Preoccupied he seemed to be,
Muttering continually—
'They're false—she lies—they're false–she lies.'

Oh, never may these mortal eyes
Behold such an unnerving sight,
With wan, unearthly, horror dight!

X.

"On my return, by accident,
At least I deemed that it was so,
I met false Gretta. Thoughts, that pent,
Since I had left that place of woe,
In my sad heart, had been,
Burst forth in an unbridled flow.
What the cause was, I do not know;
But she repented of her sin.
To Stella she confessed the whole
Guilt that oppressed her trembling soul.

XI.

"While crushed beneath the weight of grief,
Heaven graciously prepared relief.
A blessed providence placed me
In contact with your precious self:
Instinctive reciprocity,
Your love compelled from me, sweet elf.
Yes, dearest, it is ever true,
That maxim, old yet alway new,
'Love begets love.' The love divine
Conquered, my dear, your heart and mine;
And, turning, Jessica, to earth,
Your love gave my affection birth.

XII.

"Then, pet, you know, I had to leave you;
And, that in naught I should deceive you,
I told my object truthfully;
Said that, God willing, I would be
With you to-night. Julius I sought

In company with Stella. Naught
But duty kept us with each other,
For we both thought it was imprudent.
She is my sister, I, her brother,
Such is her wish. I am a student
Of the gay science, minstrelsy ;
It cannot therefore, appear strange,
Through lyric fields that I should range
To make the hours pass pleasantly.
Full many a theme my muse inspired,
Some native-born and some acquired.
Perchance you know, one sad in mind
In trifling things ofttimes will find
That which casts a restful ray
Into the darkness of their day.
So Stella pleased, I know not why,
O'er this poor song did fondly sigh ;
And, with becoming amity,
Took down the words, and gave them me.

XIII.

AN INVITATION.

"Forth into the mystic moonlight,
Darling, let us stray away.
Let us scan the page of nature
Till the dawning of the day.

"I will lead you thro' the clover,
With its many jewels bright ;
Cheeks will glow and eyes will glisten
At the sweet ambrosial sight.

"We will walk into the orchard,
Pausing 'neath each apple tree,
Till we reach the pleasant arbor,
Nook so dear to thee and me.

"We will sit and listen, darling,
Looking at the worlds above,
While the very stars above us
Whisper words of endless love.

"Then we'll pass into the forest
'Neath the maple and the beech,
Thro' whose boughs the pale moon glimmers,
In whose boughs the owlets screech.

"Soon we'll hear the voice of birdies
Singing matins sweet and clear;
Soon the shadows will be leaving,
Soon the morning will appear.

"Then, sweet one, we'll turn us homeward,
While the sun's first level rays
Tell us of the shadows broken,
Prophesy of glorious days."

XIV.

"Tis nice, I think, my minstrel boy,
Rarely do I a song enjoy
With half the zest I did this time.
Now as a guerdon for your rhyme,
I will accept the invitation,
Varying slightly the narration:
For much I fear I should take cold,
If I passed the night outside the fold."

XV.

Blondel, who sees the every charm
Of her soul-lighted beauty,
With knightly ease, presents his arm,
A gallant task, a lightsome duty.
Along the marble walk, they go
With many a tender look and word;

Such is the unrestrained, sweet flow
From youthful hearts, when deeply stirred
By chaste-eyed love, earth's graceful queen
Whose soft, entrancing, heavenly mien,
Withdrawn from our polluted vision,
Makes us pass from the field Elysian
Into the cells of Tartarus.
The winding path they follow thus
Beneath the overhanging boughs
Of maples and of poplar trees.
The latter, rustled by the breeze,
Sound, as if fairies breathe their vows.
The former, standing 'gainst the sky,
Throw 'cross the way rich tracery.

XVI

They reach a sort of tiny dell,
By the pale moonbeams lighted well,
And seat them in a rustic chair.
'Tis small for two; but then, you know,
The lover and his lady fair
Such inconveniences let go:
And, if, by accident, their arms
They cannot extricate, before
They find them fastened 'round the charms
Which they, for sooth, almost adore,
It is to be forgiven:
For innocent caresses are
The outward signs of inward heaven,
Affections, which are deeper far,
Than mortal tongue can e'er express.
Such mute expressions will confess
More than the formal use of words;
And he who laughs at sentiment,
Artless, lighthearted as the birds,
From sacrilege will not relent:

But I am wandering. After brief
And playful parley, he commences
To tell, how he obtained relief
For Julius, and the recompenses
His work has given him, "I went
To Julius' place of banishment—
So I may call it; for his will
And banned him from his friends and home:
And, when no longer fit to roam,
One, who held in remembrance still
Some act of kindness, such as he
Showed to all in extremity,
Tended him, as he would a child.
At first, his ways were fierce and wild;
But soon he sank in apathy,
As I related recently.

XVII.

"I tried my best to rouse in him
Some recollection, ev'n a dim
Recognization; but in vain.
He would not even raise his eye,
Until a hint flashed through my brain,
Which did not take me long to try.
With voice, that was not much amiss,
Gestures, not wholly out of place,
Dropping the chorus, I read this
Translation of 'La Marseillaise.'

XVIII.

"Wake, children of the Fatherland,
The day of glory has appeared.
'Gainst us, by Tyranny's fell hand,
The bloody standard now is reared.
Across the fields, do ye not hear
Shoutings of soldiers wild and fierce?

They come e'en to your arms and pierce
With death your sons and comrades dear.

"What means this vile and slavish horde
Of traitors and of federate kings?
For whom these fetters, which afford
Proof of long-wished, ignoble things?
Frenchmen, for us, the outrage see!
What transports ought it to excite,
When strangers threaten, by their might,
To bind us 'gain in slavery?

"O say! shall stranger cohorts make
The law beside our hearth's fond blaze?
Say! shall our warlike warriors quake
Before the men whom money pays?
Great God! by chained hands shall we
Be, in subjection, made to bow?
Shall despots crowns place on their brow,
As masters of our destiny?

"Tremble, tyrants, and you, O shame
Of all the world, perfidious ones,
Tremble----to parricidal fame,
At last, your every project runs.
To fight you all are warriors tried;
And, if they fall, our brave young men,
Great France produces them again
To join 'gainst you the battle tide.

"O French, magnanimous in war,
Strike, or strike not, as right demands,
Spare the sad ones, have pity for
Them, who regret the murderous bands;
But those despotic fiends of blood --------
But the accomplice of Bouillé--------
All those fierce tigers—yes, all they,
Who pity not e'en their own brood.----

"O sacred love of native land,
Guide and sustain our 'venging arms.
Sweet liberty, most dear, most grand,
Fights for the guardians of thy charms;
Under our flags let victory
March to the music of thy breath;
And let our enemies in death
Thy triumph and our glory see.

XIX.

"As I began, I thought he listened.
At the fourth line, his eye-balls glistened.
The second stanza raised his head,
The wildness from his eyes had fled.
I seemed, as if I saw him not—
It was a portion of my plot.
Through fourth and fifth, he paced the floor.
They and the next had been of yore
His favorites, when Claud translated
The poem, and we boys inflated,
With bulky words, our admiration
To make it suit the grand occasion.
The sixth and last, the best of all,
Did his enthusiasm recall.
From th' unlocked chambers of his mind,
His mighty voice, with mine combined;
And, as the last words died away
Upon the bosom of the day,
With th' ardor of a long lost friend,
Our clasped hands did the missive send
Of hearty pleasure to each mind.
A feeling vague and undefined
Of happiness o'er me did steal;
I thanked God for Rouget de L'isle,
And for our classic Claud, whose art
Had waked to life a noble heart.

XX.

"Our conversation lasted long.
At length, as if a happy thought
Occurred to me, I righted wrong,
Fearing, meanwhile, 'twould come to naught
I asked if he would like to see
Stella, his soft heart's deity:
For, I remarked, he had been sick;
And she had come to him as quick
As had been possible. His brow
Flushed with an unfeigned joy, I trow.
Ere he could speak, the door I oped;
Stella was there, as I had hoped.
I bade her mention not the past.
The seed of caution that I cast
Was needless. Jessica, my dear,
For us, 'twere sacrilege to hear
What passed between them. We can guess,
My darling, and I must confess
That when I left them to their bliss—
All similes would be amiss
But that, which likens it to Heaven—
My prayers to God for you were given."

XXI.

"Blondel, you have a truant been,
Judging you from your own narration.
Lying 's to faithlessness akin!
There is no chance for abnegation.
You said that you would come to me,
As soon as you'd performed your mission;
And, sir, so near as I can see,
That has been ended long months three.
Your word would make a splendid cushion,
It bends so nicely." "Hush! my sweet,
My argument is quite complete,

So I'll not grovel at your feet.
My dearest, I can prove to you,
If you have not impeached my word,
That everything I said was true,
I stayed, like an imprisoned bird.
What brought it on, I cannot guess;
But I became sick suddenly.
Your looks of pain, my love redress
The rudeness of your colloquy.
Do not apologize, my dear;
For discords made with your intent
But add unto the harmony,
That in the intervals is pent.
Julius and Stella cared for me,
Like nurses of ability;
And, when I strong enough had grown
To travel, I came not alone.
Why they came with me, you perceive,
If not, your doubts, I'll soon relieve.

XXII.

"This morn, we reached our journey's end.
Ev'n then I could not leave my friend;
For he had work for me to do—
I own, it made me rather blue.
I sent a present to you, dear,
Which made me feel a trifle better,
Especially as—this you'll hear
With wonder—I wrote you a letter.
Beside 'The Maid of Athens,' I
Intended to have placed it.
You see, I thought that would apply,
If only I prefaced it;
But all the rest were in a worry,
And I forgot it in my hurry.
Soon as old Parson Macaroni

Had got them through the ceremony
With more simplicity than fiction,
I gave them both my benediction,
And started off in the direction
My lode-star's luster led,
As the magnetic needle makes selection,
When all opposing force is fled.

XXIII.

"And I am here, my precious girl,
Upon this blessed Christmas even;
And, while night's banner doth unfurl,
I seem to feel the breath of Heaven."
"Yes Blondel," Jessica replies,
"I'm feasting, now, my famished eyes
Upon your well beloved face,
Which was the first to smile on me.
You stole my heart with such a grace,
It joyed at its captivity.
God has heen bountiful to us,
Faith tells me 'twill be ever thus."
"Yes," Blondel says, "my gentle dove,
You were the first, the only one,
Of all the fair beneath the sun,
Who gave me an enduring love.
The Lord hath blessed us both, I ween,
And made us one in soul, my queen."

XXIV.

Permit me, friends, to draw the veil
Of privacy about my tale.
Let them enjoy their *tete-a-tete*,
The blessed victims of a fate,
That loosens them from selfish care,
And makes them for the sky prepare,
Rejoice in favor, kiss the rod,
And trust their future unto God.

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